

Martyr for Mental Health:
John R. Seeley and the Forest Hill Village Project, 1948 – 1956

by

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for the degree of Doctor of Education
Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Social Justice Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

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Abstract

This is the history of a mental health project conducted in the schools of Forest Hill, Ontario during the 1950s. Its original name was the Forest Hill Village Project but it became famous in history as *Crestwood Heights*, the book written about the project by John R. Seeley, Alex Sim and Elizabeth Loosley. The Forest Hill Village Project was a significant event in Canadian history not only as part of the first mental health grants ever issued by the federal government; but also as the first major attempt to address the mental health needs of children in school. Hatched at the highest levels of military planning during the Second World War, the Forest Hill Village Project would involve senior government and university administrators as well as psychiatrists, social workers and teachers from across Canada in an experiment in psychoanalytic pedagogy. John R. Seeley was the only individual, however, whose fate was so inextricably linked with the project that it cannot be understood apart from him. It was because of Seeley's genius that a mental health revolution from the top-down was attempted in Canadian history, and it was because of his own psychological issues that it failed. The martyrdom of John R. Seeley did not consist simply in the irony of his own fall into mental illness while leading a mental health project in the schools of Forest Hill, but also in his being effectively banished from Canadian society because of his efforts. The admixture of Seeley's personal issues and his revolutionary commitment to mass psychoanalysis eventually brought him into irreconcilable conflict with the more conservative leadership of Canada's medical and educational establishment. Though Seeley was forced out of teaching in Canada, the history of his mental health revolution may yet open doorways for the future of mental health in Canadian schools.

Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone; and he slung *it* and struck the Philistine in his forehead, so that the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth.

1 Samuel 17:52

And when he was demanded of the Pharisees when the Kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, “The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, Lo there! For behold, the kingdom of God is within you”.

Luke, XVII, 20 – 21

“Where Lord”? And he said unto them, “Where-so-ever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together”.

Luke XVII, 37

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The Seeley Question

Introduction:

Journey

Time is like a child playing checkers; the kingly power is a child's.

Heraclitus

The writing of a history such as this one about John R. Seeley and the Forest Hill Village Project has a fascinating history of its own. Indeed, the historian's own journey and that of the people in the past he writes about become so intertwined that to leave it out might be a violation of the historian's quest to see things whole, however tempting it may be to overlook one's own responsibilities. My experience in the writing of this history has been that it is often necessary to jump about in time, like a checkerboard king, in order to make sense of the past. To dichotomize past, present and future, or author and subject, in the hope of achieving greater clarity of perspective may be self-defeating if we carry it too far. Thus, while this history generally conforms to the expectation that it will follow events in chronological order, it also jumps around a bit where this seems to help to elucidate the story. In this spirit, I will begin at the end by introducing how this history came to be written.

My part in this story began in 1989 when I found myself engaged in an all-absorbing process of long-term psychotherapy. Every week for almost twenty years I trudged down to the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry hoping that this time I would make the final breakthrough, but it never came. As part of that adventure in self-exploration I became obsessed with the history of psychoanalysis. I must clarify at the outset that, despite my own pretence, I had no actual experience of psychoanalysis except to the extent that it was factored into the eclectic methodology of medical psychotherapy in Ontario today. It would seem that my obsession with Freud and psychoanalysis had to do not only with my need to transfigure my therapy into some kind of religious experience, but also with my interest in its educational applications. I often found myself making connections between the insights I was achieving in therapy and the issues I faced daily as a classroom teacher. Indeed, as my career progressed, I became increasingly convinced that talk therapy might serve as a useful model for other learning processes. For, it is only in the process of coming to know someone as an individual, or as a member of a group, that insight can be achieved into the possibilities for making a particular topic

meaningful to them. Seeley himself once said to me, “I don’t think you can call it teaching if you don’t know anything about your students”.¹

Thus, I was led through personal experience to an interest in what a psychoanalytically enlightened education might look like. As a history teacher, it seemed natural for me to look for a telling story about some early mental health program conducted in schools. I thought perhaps I could study Anna Freud’s “matchbox school”.² I was intrigued by the fact that Freud’s daughter had conducted experiments in what became known at the time as psychoanalytic pedagogy. However, my supervisor at the University of Toronto (U of T), Dr. David Levine without whose insight and professional experience this history could not have been written, counseled against such an ambitious plan because of the physical, financial and linguistic barriers. Instead, he suggested, perhaps something was going on in Toronto itself in the early heyday of psychoanalysis that would be more accessible to study.

Despite my initial skepticism that anything so avant-garde as a psychoanalytic experiment in education had ever been tried in Toronto, I started to rummage through the archives at the Center for Addiction and Mental Health. Much to my amazement, it wasn’t long before I stumbled across a file in regard to the Forest Hill Village Project and its leader John R. Seeley. This had been a massive government funded and psychoanalytically oriented mental health project conducted in the schools of Toronto between 1948 and 1956. The goal of the Forest Hill Village Project had been to conduct an experimental psychiatric intervention in schools that would serve to promote mental health at the decisive developmental stages. The method was to introduce a form of group psychotherapy into the curriculum and to establish psychiatric clinics in schools. But that was not all. The research team of the Forest Hill Village Project headed by Seeley also sought to analyze the mental health of the community itself, and the impact of this on its children, through offering psychological education to parents as well.

Amazing! In fact, funding for the Forest Hill Village Project was part of the first National Health Program Grants ever awarded in Canadian history. In monetary terms, the Mental Health Grants were the largest of all the specific grants made under the new program in 1948. Of a total of \$30 million in Health Grants dispensed by the government of Mackenzie-King in that year, “\$4 million

¹ Interviews with John R. Seeley, Los Angeles, March 2007

² Nick Midgely, ““The Matchbox School”: Anna Freud and the Idea of a ‘Psychoanalytically Informed Education’” (*Journal of Child Psychotherapy*, Volume 34, Issue 1, 2008), 24.

would be spent in Ontario, of which \$1, 284, 235 was to go toward mental health”.³ Though the recipients of the mental health grants in other provinces were less generously endowed than were Seeley and others in Ontario, the nature of the research projects pursued by Ewen Cameron at McGill, and Humphrey Osmond and Abram Hoffer at the Regina General Hospital, amongst others, were equally radical in their aims and methods:

Cameron attempted to demonstrate the efficacy of radically applied electroconvulsive therapy in his “psychic driving” experiments, which were conducted on mentally ill patients without their permission. He was also funded by the American Central Intelligence Agency to explore the effects of “brainwashing,” which included the use of LSD on patients in conjunction to his other “depatterning” techniques. The fascination with LSD extended to Saskatchewan, where Humphrey Osmond and Abram Hoffer explored the use of this drug for therapeutic purposes. All of these hospital-based researchers employed an experimental approach sometimes using patients as unwitting subjects, to explore the limits of the human mind and the ways in which it might be controlled or altered.⁴

Indeed, to delve deeply into the history of the Forest Hill Village Project, as this thesis seeks to do, is in a sense to complete the missing part of a trilogy in the historiography of post-war social engineering in Canada that is most revealing in terms of the interests of governments in the field of mental health. Just as in the case of the CIA’s involvement in Cameron’s thought control research in Montreal, planning for the Forest Hill Village Project can be traced to the highest levels of Canada’s military. However, the Forest Hill Village project was quite revolutionary in the scope of its design to achieve changes in social policy across Canada in contrast to Cameron’s more secretive experiments.

Seeley even went so far as to describe the Forest Hill Village Project as utopian in a presentation he gave to the International Congress of the World Federation for Mental Health in 1954:

Workers concerned about Mental Health, are, very properly, dreamers of great dreams, Utopians in the best sense...Among these dreams that inspire or beset us are those in which there is some diminution of distance between the cooperating disciplines, in which the social work lion can be brought to lie down with the psychiatric lamb, the sociological swords are beat into psychological ploughshares, and the educator and therapist do not make war any more...These are grand dreams – or grandiose – and each of them had a place in shaping what came to be called The Forest Hill

³ Roger Baskett, “The Life of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital” in Shorter, E. ed., *TPH: History and Memories of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital, 1925 – 1966* Toronto, Wall and Emerson Inc., 1996, 126.

⁴ Judith Fingard and John Rutherford, “Social Disintegration, Problem Pregnancies, Civilian Disasters: Psychiatric Research in Nova Scotia in the 1950s”, in J. Moran and D. Wright ed., *Mental Health and Canadian Society: Historical Perspectives*, Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2006, 211.

Village Project - itself not a dream but an attempt to probe deeper into reality, and in some fashion to refashion it.⁵

In Seeley's view, therefore, the Forest Hill Village Project was not just of local importance; it was an attempt to change the world. What then had gone wrong? Why hadn't mental health programs and pedagogies gained a stronger presence in educational systems as a result of a project of this magnitude? One might understand why experiments with LSD and CIA-inspired "brainwashing" would fall out of favour, but what was wrong with the attempt to promote the mental health of school children? Was it because the best that science could offer at the time was some form of psychoanalytic approach with all its dark associations to children's sexuality? Such questions seemed to deserve an answer. Indeed, I often had the experience during my work on the Forest Hill Village Project that it was not me who was writing history, but that history was writing me. Carried along in this sense by the contingencies of historical research and reasoning, I arrived at the thesis that the answers to these questions largely turn on an understanding of one wonderfully complex individual in history, John R. Seeley.

Having hit upon the idea of writing a history of the Forest Hill Village Project, one thing led to another and before I knew it I found myself in March of 2007 on a plane with my young family bound for Los Angeles. We were going to meet and search out the files of the great man himself. Seeley was by that time, as it turned out, on his death bed at the age of 94, but still quite spunky, and sharp as a whip.⁶ I met Jack as he was often called by his friends, in his humble bungalow in Los Angeles just off Pico Blvd. He was so intent on telling me the story, not just of the Forest Hill Village Project, but of his life, that I regrettably had very little time to spend at the beach with the rest of the family, the surfers and the dolphins. Instead, it was me, Seeley, and his dusty old garage.

Despite the rather unkempt environment of his home, into and out of which roamed a few of his sons, grandsons and Hispanic nurses, a glimmer of the charisma for which Seeley had been noted by his colleagues in Toronto way back in the 1950s still shone through his aging body. His skill in articulation and his intellectual versatility were an experience in themselves. Yet, as an interviewer with more than my own share of narcissistic needs, I often felt completely beside the point. Seeley

⁵ John R. Seeley, "The Forest Hill Village Project: An Action Research". A paper presented to the World Federation for Mental Health, International Congress, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1954. Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶ Here I must mention with gratitude the support of Cyril Greenland and John Court at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Archives in Toronto for their help in establishing contact with Seeley and in encouraging my application for funding from the Hewton and Griffin Bursaries for Archival Research in 2007.

took no interest whatsoever in me, though it was clear during my presence that week that I was to attend to his place in history with much the same level of care that his Hispanic nurses were expected to pay to his social calendar. It was not long however, till I became quite enthusiastic myself about this task and I found myself falling more and more under the spell of his story.

Finally, I asked him if I could write his biography. He said yes. This was the pact between us though perhaps at first I underestimated how serious he was about it. At that moment, I remember that he did pay attention to me and offer a compliment. Seeley said that he liked the way I had been able to articulate the central direction of his career during our conversations that week in Los Angeles. Soon after this point, the climax of our interviews, Seeley invited me to bring my wife and children to visit. They too fell under his spell. Despite being hooked up to the intravenous and suffering the after effects of pneumonia, he threw out his arms in welcome and regaled them with yarns about how big the waves were, and he shared chocolates with them. He warned us that we should not be too strict with potty training our son no matter how much the inconvenience or frustration involved.

When I was not interviewing Seeley, I turned to the task of digging through the strewn piles of old junk in the alleyway garage behind his house. I slowly dug through to the filing cabinets, like an archaeologist in some remote cave. Actually, I had to break into some of them because the keys had been lost. This search for traces of the Forest Hill Village Project amongst the piles of disintegrating papers was not altogether futile. For all the miserable searching and sorting, pushing and pulling, it was of course one of the very first files I came across which proved most useful. It was marked, “Crestwood Heights: Staff Memos”.⁷ The title of the book that Seeley wrote about the Forest Hill Village Project, and on the basis of which he built his academic career, was *Crestwood Heights*.

Now, there were some other files I felt were really interesting, like the correspondence I came across between Seeley and famous Canadian philosopher George Grant. However, I regret to say that I left them there because they did not seem related to my topic. The Seeley–Grant correspondence took place in the sixties, sometime after the Forest Hill Village Project had been terminated. I did carefully mark these letters, and the letters he exchanged with Anna Freud as well, in case I ever returned. This was my first mistake as novice historian. Of course, I never did return and I have since learned not to be so linear in my approach to historical research. Nevertheless, on the last day of my week-long visit with Seeley, I passed the onerous tests of Seeley’s son John Jr., who insisted on checking every single document to be borrowed even though his father had already given me

⁷ Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

permission to take them. This last minute search and detainment nearly caused me to miss my flight. As might be imagined, I was somewhat relieved to finally make it out of Los Angeles with a backpack full of files which I have come to call the, “Seeley Papers”, and my family in tow.

Not long after my return to Toronto I was surprised to be confronted with subtle threats from Seeley by phone call in regard to the “Seeley Papers”. Apparently, he had expected me to maintain regular contact with him. He demanded a return of the documents and suggested that he would be forced to find another biographer to work on his materials if I failed to make faster progress. Of course, there was no need for any alarm on Seeley’s part; I was just really busy with other things, like my job. In any case, I perceived a need for reassurance that I would be loyal to my assignment and so I began to make regular, respectful calls, in which I explored further the themes we had taken up in Los Angeles.

This seemed to work, and I must confess, Seeley’s gentleness and his charm came through to me more clearly once we had re-engaged in a conversation by phone about his career. He never did take an interest in me, but he confided in more honest ways about his past in what ended up being the last few months of his life. I began to develop some sympathy for him to counter-balance my resentment. I was particularly interested in features of his life-story that he had hinted at but did not fully develop. For example, he told stories about how his mother had been abusive toward him, but the things he reported that she did never seemed that bad. I was also curious about his cultural heritage. He told me that his father’s last name was Friedeberg which suggested to me that Seeley was likely Jewish. Seeley would not directly admit this. Rather, he said about his father, “I am quite sure he was not Christian”. He also said his father had been a wealthy grain merchant who Seeley remembered as having boasted that an army runs on grain. If Seeley was so wealthy by birth, why were there not more signs of this in his home? When I arranged to visit him in Los Angeles over the phone, during a desolate Toronto winter month in 2006, I was charmed by his description of the flowers growing in his garden in Los Angeles. He conjured a scene reminiscent of some English aristocrat’s country garden. I was quite disappointed when I arrived to find that, rather than a garden, there was only a broken down old jalopy and a junk-filled garage. Admittedly, this scene did have a charm of its own against the backdrop of a pale blue Californian sky and the graffiti littered fences of a Los Angeles alley way.

I also wanted to know more about his own psychoanalysis which he so often referred to, but in regard to which we never got beyond some interesting allusions. However, having already borne the brunt

of his anger I was afraid I was becoming too intrusive. When I told him this he said, “No, I think it’s lovely”.⁸ Finally, in a strange twist of fate during one of our telephone conversations, Seeley directed me to visit his friend Beatrice Fischer. As we were exploring the remaining unanswered questions about his past that I, acting in the role of his biographer, was curious about; Seeley decided that the best place to look for more information was the Fischer’s. He told me that Beatrice was the wife of the man who had been his analyst when he lived in Toronto, Dr. Martin Fischer. Seeley said he was still in touch with Beatrice Fischer and she would be happy to share with me what she knew. As it turned out this was our last conversation. A month later he died.

It was just after the news of Seeley’s death that I first met Beatrice Fischer in her impressive Forest Hill mansion. Now, she would make the point that, strictly speaking, her house was not within the boundaries of Forest Hill; and that she had no need for reasons of social status to claim that she lived in Forest Hill; and, furthermore, that her house was not a mansion. But that was just like her. Often the plucky-spirited little girl from Woodstock Ontario seemed to emerge from inside the elegant elderly woman I was seated across from enjoying tea, and sometimes a fish-head. Yet, despite her bold claims, there is no doubt that the Fischer’s house is most impressive and indeed straddles the boundaries of the affluent neighbourhood of Forest Hill in Toronto.

At any rate, having arrived at the Fischer’s, I was ushered by the Phillipino servant Beth into the library where I found her sitting in a chair under a large photograph of Freud. The chair was draped with the same kind of blanket as one can see thrown over the great man’s famous couch in Vienna. She gestured to the photograph above her head to introduce her husband, because she said she “thought of him that way”.⁹ Martin Fischer was a contemporary of Freud who had also grown up in Vienna. She said that he had worshipped Freud, which I could see as I glanced at the bookshelves lined with his collected works. Beatrice recalled that her husband would sit in that chair when he was still alive and read from Freud’s works and quote out loud to her from humorous passages that he found. Martin had actually met Freud one day, she told me, when he knocked on the door of Freud’s house hoping to sell him tickets to a show being held to raise money for a Jewish Charity. As I listened to these stories, I began to feel as though I had found my way back to *fin-de-siecle* Vienna after all.

⁸ Interviews with John R. Seeley, Los Angeles, March 2007

⁹ Interview with Beatrice Fischer, 10 September 2008

In this, our first of many conversations, Beatrice Fischer talked fondly about John R. Seeley both in terms of his charm and his foibles. She expressed particular frustration that his sons had not contacted her at the time of his death. I could relate to this as my efforts to contact Seeley's sons, after my initial work in excavating the "Seeley Papers", also went unanswered. Yet, we must bear in mind that in many senses California is worlds away from "Toronto the Good". At any rate, after having talked about her long relationship with Seeley and about his friendship with her husband, Beatrice invited me to search through her basement to see if any records remained of their correspondence. She drew a little sketch of directions so that I could make my way through the labyrinthine cellar of her Forest Hill mansion to the little white room where she thought such files might be found. Again, like an archaeologist descending into some long forgotten tomb, I managed to find my way to a closet room jammed pack with a century full of things. Much to my amazement the first filing cabinet I opened, the one least covered with junk and easiest to access, contained a collection of files entitled, "Seeley".¹⁰ They were full of letters, poems, articles, drafts of essays and notes which I have come to refer to as the "Fischer Papers". We had discovered a private correspondence that had occurred between the two friends over the course of their life-long partnership. I realized at that point that it had been Seeley's dying wish that the full story of his fascinating life, which he had been forced to hide for so long because of its bewildering complexities, would be finally revealed.

¹⁰ Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

Part I

John R. Seeley in Historiography

There God anointed me with his divine gifts and fruits of his Spirit, as prophet of the new world. Not long afterwards, only a few days, people began to treat me like a madman.

Louis Riel

1. The Individual in History

i) The Passion of John R. Seeley

In contrast to our neighbour to the South, Canadian society has seldom been very kind to its rebels. There are few stories of revolutionary midnight rides, silver haired generals gracefully surrendering their rebel armies, or famous outlaws who manage to elude capture time after time only to finally die with their boots on. Rather, many Canadian rebels going back as far as Jean de Brebeuf and men like Louis Riel, William Lyon Mackenzie, J. S. Woodsworth, Paul Rose and Marc Carbonneau, have been ignominiously thrown in jail, tortured, put to death, or, most commonly, banished. John R. Seeley's story as a Canadian crusader for mental health in the early post-war era shares many characteristics with these other Canadian outcasts.

The importance to Seeley of his identification with Biblical figures was one thing he shared in common with men like Riel. Seeley remembered to me that his grandmother hoped that he would have a religious mission someday like that of the great Old Testament prophets. As he wrote in an autobiographical memoir he delivered late in life to the congregation of the Episcopal Church in Los Angeles entitled, "Strange Journey":

It was clear to me --- though never traceably said ---that I was to her the possible, actually potential, David, Joseph, Moses.¹¹

His nanny, who along with the other family servants would most likely have been of Christian heritage, also believed that John had a special mission in life:

I would become a missionary some-day - nanny thought so - and tell the others this great news.¹²

¹¹ John R. Seeley, "Strange Journey", Undated, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

However, the examples placed before his fertile young imagination by his grandmother and nanny were not, of course, limited to these prophets of the Old Testament. He was also comforted by stories about Jesus' love for children:

...she told me that God loved me...that He loved me was an overturning of my whole world. And Jesus too: the "friend of little children above the bright blue sky, a friend who never faileth, whose love can never die"! I saw in my mind's eye the children crowding around and up to Jesus, and the ordinary stupid adults shooing them away. And then this man of wonder speaks the words I longed to hear, reproaching the adults, establishing the children, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven".¹³

It is interesting to reflect on the particular biblical characters that Seeley had chosen in his childhood memoirs. It might be speculated that Seeley's identification with the political figures of David, Joseph and Moses underlay the long history of his quest for association to persons with power, and his uncanny ability to actually make this happen. In interviews, Seeley would come back again and again to stories about the time he attended a meeting with President Kennedy, or the time Lyndon Johnson had grabbed Seeley by the balls because Seeley remembered his birthday. Though these Presidential relationships were in fact superficial, Seeley was to come close indeed to the elite of medical and educational power in Canada.

It might also be speculated that Seeley's career focus on the problems of education was infused with his identification with the child-like innocence of Jesus. This theme was perhaps the only constant in Seeley's career from the time of the Forest Hill Village Project to his work in later life as a lay child psychoanalyst. Though he could never summon up effective institutional loyalty, and his adult relationships oscillated between the extremes of adulation and rejection, Seeley was always interested in children and they seemed to like him too. I can say this from experience having watched my own children caught by his spell. Indeed, from the time of his early leadership of a cub pack in Toronto in the 1930s, to his elderly days as a peripatetic professor, he could always hold children in thrall with his special charisma. Rick Salutin, a disciple of Seeley and a reputable and critical journalist in the spirit of his mentor, fondly remembers Seeley still romping on the floor with his son while the other worn out adults had made their escape to the living room.¹⁴

¹² John R. Seeley, "Strange Journey", Undated, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

¹³ Seeley, "Strange Journey", Undated, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

¹⁴ Interview with Rick Salutin, 21 November 2008

The identification with Jesus' mission might have also influenced the leftist bent in Seeley's activism which was undoubtedly a contributing cause of the troubles in which he frequently found himself. Indeed, there has often been a link to an underlying Christian zeal behind the famous reformers of Canadian history. One thinks immediately of Riel's delusion that he had a divine mission to save the Metis people. Riel's self-proclamation as a prophet of the new world resonates with Seeley's own story as an orphan of European descent who finds it his destiny to spread the gospel of psychoanalysis in his wanderings throughout the new world. We must not forget to also mention other new world reformers of a Marxist bent, such as J. S. Wordsworth or Tommy Douglas, who also came to their left wing politics via the ministry. Indeed, religious inspiration, according to leftist historian Ian McKay, has been one of the principal paths to socialism in Canadian history:

A fifth much travelled route to leftism in Canada begins with a spiritual awakening – meaning for the majority within Protestant and Catholic forms of Christianity... Given that many elements of capitalism are in tension, to put it mildly, with the letter and spirit of Christ's teachings as they are reported in the New Testament, Christians who take their religion seriously have had to wrestle with glaring contradictions.¹⁵

For Seeley, a psychoanalytically enlightened education was a form of social action as much as of individual therapy. He suggests in *The Americanization of the Unconscious*, with his typical reliance on Biblical allusion, that it offers an alternative model of social relations to those which prevail under capitalism:

The existence in the world – the same world where men have uses! – of the therapeutic alliance serves to raise an uncomfortable question about every alternative relation. For the core of it is an interpenetration and interplay between the actual best in one person and the latent best in another, with no other aim in view but the release in the one who – momentarily – has the less to give of that latent best crying for its own liberation into reality. And that operation underwritten not by a judgement of relative worth but by a presumption of absolute value. And the reward not in money (which merely makes it possible) nor affection which sometimes hampers it, nor honor which is at best a by-product, but in pure joy in pure liberation: “For my growth have no garden but only to grow...” For the true psycho-curator: “And the lives of my children made perfect with freedom of soul were my fruits”.¹⁶

Seeley went so far in the *Americanization of the Unconscious* as to recommend that a process of generalized psychotherapy was the only possible strategic path toward social reconstruction.

¹⁵ Ian McKay, *Rebels, Reds, Radicals: Rethinking Canada's Left History* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2005), 42.

¹⁶ John R. Seeley, *Americanization of the Unconscious* (New York: International Science Press, 1967), 45.

Despite the fact that Seeley did not participate in communist or socialist party politics, the fact that he believed in a revolutionary approach is revealed over and over in *The Americanization of the Unconscious*. It can be found overtly in chapter titles like, “The Psychiatrist as Reluctant Revolutionary”, or “Parents – the Last Proletariat”. It is also revealed in passages such as the following:

We know that it is of the essence of human systems to be unstable, that it is our business to destabilize them, and that these are the grounds respectively of such freedom and responsibility as we have.¹⁷

To the extent that Seeley identified with Christ’s tendency to either look past political authority, or to storm the temple in the cause of righteousness, we might not be surprised to find that he experienced a falling out with the rulers of academia in Canada. Dr. Aldwyn Stokes, founder and Chair of the Clark Institute of Psychiatry, and Dr Murray Ross, founder and President of York University, both washed their hands of Seeley’s case and cast him out of the country for mysterious reasons.

In “Strange Journey”, Seeley wrote, “religiously I was born in exile”.¹⁸ He claimed to mean that he was by nature a Christian soul who was unfortunately born into a wealthy family that was “fashionably atheistic”, as he put it.¹⁹ Yet this original sense of religious exile pervaded his whole life. In my interviews with him he said that he did not feel at home in Los Angeles, where he had spent the longest time in one single place, and sadly, where he died. Rather he felt most attached to Toronto, a city from which he felt banished. This feeling of exile stayed with him his whole life and proved to be a self-fulfilling prophecy.

ii) Foucault’s Passion

Since Seeley, like other men who may be identified as rebels and martyrs in Canadian history, sacrificed so much for the sake of making social change happen, it seems that the potential impact of the individual in history is an important theoretical question to address at the outset of this study. Shakespeare famously wrote in *Hamlet* that, “there is a divinity that shapes our ends, rough – hew them how we will”.²⁰ Whether the divinity of Shakespeare is otherwise referred to as Hegel’s reason, Marx’s class or even Foucault’s power, all these historical thinkers allow some room, however small

¹⁷ Seeley, *Americanization of the Unconscious*, 265.

¹⁸ Seeley, “Strange Journey”, Undated, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

¹⁹ Interviews with John R Seeley, Los Angeles, March 2007

²⁰ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act 5 Scene 2. http://www.shakespeare-online.com/plays/hamlet_5_2.html, October 11th, 2012.

and rough-hewn, for the influence of the individual personality in history. Another very memorable way of articulating the nature of that space within which our historical agency has some room for manoeuvre was famously offered by Karl Marx in the following passage from the *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*:

Men make their own history but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly found, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionizing themselves and things, in creating something entirely new, precisely in such epochs of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle slogans and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time honoured disguise and this borrowed language.²¹

There may indeed be some likeness from this Marxist perspective between the coups of Hamlet or Louis Bonaparte and radical educational projects like that undertaken by John R. Seeley in Forest Hill. Whether it was Hamlet's father, Louis uncle, or Seeley's mother, in each case the ghost of the past that "weighs like a nightmare" on the revolutionary activist was a regal parental figure imbued with all the appropriate accoutrements of class, power and authority. Here we see the theories of Marx and Freud dovetail nicely. In each case, the revolutionary regicide is replete with undercurrents of Oedipal fantasies. As a result, the overthrow takes on more of the character of a repetition compulsion than a revolution. Perhaps, this was because at some level the real motivation for these revolutions was not the creation of something new, but rather to avenge the past.

Whereas Marx was optimistic that these vicious cycles of history might ultimately be overcome, the historical thinker with whom we shall be most concerned in this story, Michel Foucault, suffered no such illusions. Though Foucault validated individual acts of resistance in the inevitable power struggles of history, he foresaw no end to such struggles. Whereas Marx held out hope that the participation of individuals in critical consciousness raising could help to lay the ghosts of the past finally to rest; Foucault felt that after the death of God all aspirations toward transcendence must give way to individual acts of creative transgression. Where Marx still believed in the enlightenment project of a rational society; Foucault extolled the emancipatory potential of sado-masochistic rituals. We must focus most closely on Foucault's theories of the role of the individual in the circulation of social power because, as other scholars who have studied the Forest Hill Village Project have found, his theories resonate so well in relation to such post-war social engineering projects.

²¹ Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte", in Robert C. Tucker ed., *The Marx – Engels Reader 2nd edition* (New York: W W Norton & Co, 1978), 595.

According to Foucault, not only at the social level but also within the individual, history is an unpredictable and “endless play of dominations”. The Foucauldian person loses his identity in favour of a kind of historically determined multiple personality disorder. For Foucault this loss of identity is also not, however, to be seen as a negative form of fragmentation, but as a loosening of the bonds of psychiatrically imposed normality, individuality and personality. Foucault thinks of the modern drive toward individualization as an effect of “bio-power” that serves to compartmentalize, segregate, isolate and control populations. Foucault writes that:

The political, ethical, social, philosophical problem of our day is not to try to liberate the individual from the state and from the type of individualization linked to the state. We have to promote new forms of subjectivity through the refusal of this kind of individuality that has been imposed on us for several centuries.²²

In institutional terms, the foundations of the drive to control populations were already laid by the Catholic Church. Contrary to what is commonly thought, Foucault argues that the Church did not disappear with the coming of modernity, but rather its functions were absorbed into those of the State:

Power of the pastoral type which over centuries – for more than a millennium – had been linked to a defined religious institution, suddenly spread out into the whole social body. It found support in a multitude of institutions. And, instead of a pastoral power and a political power, more or less linked to each other, more or less in rivalry, there was an individualizing ‘tactic’ that characterized a series of powers: those of the family, medicine, psychiatry, education....²³

For Foucault, this “individualizing tactic” is a form of disciplinary surveillance that binds persons to a restrictive identity that is then measured against relatively cruel standards of normality. The psychoanalytic technique enables this to be achieved according to Foucault because, “this form of power cannot be exercised without knowing the inside of people’s minds, without exploring their souls, without making them reveal their innermost secrets. It implies knowledge of the conscience and an ability to direct it”.²⁴ Thus the Catholic confession becomes the psychoanalytic session, where the only rule is to allow the free association of one’s thoughts. The powers of the priest to know and to absolve fall into the hands of the psychoanalyst and perhaps also the teacher.

When searching for recent books that borrow the religious phrase, “the passion of Christ” as I have for the title of the previous chapter, I was surprised to come across James Miller’s intellectual

²² Foucault, “The Subject and Power”, in Rabinow & Rose ed., *The Essential Foucault*, 134.

²³ Foucault, “The Subject and Power”, in Rabinow & Rose ed., *The Essential Foucault*, 133.

²⁴ Foucault, “The Subject and Power”, in Rabinow & Rose ed., *The Essential Foucault*, 132.

biography entitled, *The Passion of Michel Foucault*²⁵. Of course, there are many other contemporary books written about Jesus, or other religious figures like Joan of Arc, that use the phrase “the passion”. It is less common in regard to secular figures, but as it turns out it is quite fitting in relation to the life and thought of Michel Foucault. The implicit comparison in the book between Christ and Foucault is based on Miller’s observation that both men were led to their agonizing suffering and death by an extreme commitment to their beliefs. Where Jesus submitted himself to the horror of crucifixion at Golgotha in order to demonstrate faith in his God, Foucault contracted AIDS for practising sexual freedom in California after the death of God. Ironically, John R. Seeley who shared in Foucault’s quest to challenge the norms of modern society also finally found himself banished to California. Admittedly, Seeley’s banishment was a far lighter punishment in comparison to crucifixion or AIDS. Perhaps that is why the story of his martyrdom for mental health has never achieved the same level of recognition. It is precisely in their very extremity that cultural symbols, like Christ, Foucault, or now Seeley achieve their penetrating powers.

We must remind ourselves of one more thing before moving to the next stage in our story.

Foucault’s analysis of power does not portray it simply as a negative repressive force. Foucault saw power as a positive, enabling force, that circulates pervasively, if not randomly, through our lives:

Power must be analyzed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody’s hands, never appropriated as a commodity or a piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organization. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power.²⁶

From Foucault’s perspective, we must therefore also dispel from our imagination the tendency to see the individual actor in history as a discrete, unitary, rational subject. Rather, Foucault sees the individual as torn into bits by history. One part, or trait, of the individual lurching in this direction; another pushing back or going off in another direction:

History becomes effective to the degree that it introduces discontinuity into our very being – as it divides our emotions, dramatizes our instincts, multiplies our body and sets it against itself. Effective history leaves nothing around the self, deprives the self of the reassuring stability of life and nature, and it will not permit itself to be transported by a voiceless obstinacy toward a millennial ending. It will uproot its traditional foundations and relentlessly disrupt its pretended continuity. This is because knowledge is not made for understanding; it is made for cutting.²⁷

²⁵ James Miller, *The Passion of Michel Foucault* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993)

²⁶ Michel Foucault, “Knowledge/Power” in Paul Rabinow and Nicholas Rose ed., *The Essential Foucault, Selections of Essential Works of Foucault, 1954 – 1984* (New York: The New Press, 1994), 98.

²⁷ Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”, in Rabinow & Rose ed., *The Essential Foucault*, 360.

We shall find that Foucault's analysis of the individual in history helps us to better understand the often confusing contradictions in Seeley's behaviour. This was a man whose missionary dedication to the cause of a psychoanalytically enlightened education often seemed to stand in direct confrontation with the destructive consequences of his Machiavellian political scheming. Moreover, it was not just what he did to others in his maneuvers for power, but the suffering that he brought on himself which suggests that Seeley's creative work was often countermanded by his passion for "cutting".

2. Eugenists

i) W. E. Blatz and the Ghost of Mesmer

If Seeley's personal identity issues set him off in the direction of becoming a martyr for mental health, it is important to show how the context of his times helped to seal his fate. Theresa Richardson, author of one of the leading historical studies on the mental hygiene movement in North America, in which Seeley would come to play a leading part, recommended that "good history...must include an assessment of the relative contribution of external social forces and the dynamics of individual biography".²⁸ In her book entitled *Century of the Child*, Richardson identifies Dr. William E. Blatz, Director of the U of T Institute for Child Study from 1938–1960, as the key individual personality influencing the mental health movement in Ontario. According to Richardson, the mental hygiene movement achieved a particularly institutionalized and interventionist form in Ontario because of Blatz's functionalist, anti-psychoanalytic therapeutic style.

Richardson traces the career of Dr. Blatz whose "authority in Ontario was straightforward", as an exemplar of the confluence of structural and biographical forces that resulted in the construction of mental hygiene regimes across North America in the twentieth century.²⁹ But what is the relevance of Richardson's study of mental hygiene and the infamous Dr. Blatz to historical images of John R. Seeley, especially when she makes no mention of our hero? This omission of John R. Seeley as an important player in her study is partly a reflection of its scope, which covers the movement in the United States and Canada over the course of the whole twentieth century. Nonetheless, while it is true that she does not address Seeley's role specifically, her study of Blatz's career is important for an understanding of the immediate historical context of the Forest Hill Village Project. In fact, it was the

²⁸ Theresa Richardson, *The Century of the Child: The Mental Hygiene Movement and Social Policy in the United States and Canada* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1989), 6.

²⁹ Richardson, *Century of the Child*, 125.

protégés of Dr. Blatz namely, Dr. William Line of the U of T Department of Psychology, and Dr. John Griffin, head of the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), who were to become the supervisors of Seeley as Director of the Forest Hill Village Project. Moreover, in the early days at least, Line and Griffin promoted Seeley's career as if they expected him to become the heir to Blatz's legacy. As the Forest Hill Village Project progressed Seeley showed a consciousness of this expectation in his efforts to distinguish his work from that of Blatz. Perhaps even Richardson herself became so mesmerized by the personal charisma and success of Dr. Blatz that she overlooked the importance of the more chequered career of his would be successor, John R. Seeley.

So, who was the great Dr. Blatz? In a curious twist of historical fate, he was a German descendent of the great Mesmer, father of European psychotherapy. In fact, Blatz's idiosyncratic therapeutic style mirrored the laying of hands approach of his infamous ancestor. According to Jocelyn Raymond's biography, *The Nursery World of Dr. Blatz*, the father of Blatz's mother, Victoria Mesmer, whose name was Johannes Mesmer, "was a descendent of the Franz Anton Mesmer who had enjoyed a flurry of fame and won himself a dubious reputation as a magnetic therapist in eighteenth-century Vienna".³⁰ The original Mesmer utilized his own "animal magnetism", as he called it, to re-direct the flow of energy, or "gravitatio universalis" in his terms, so that it returned to a state of equilibrium in his patients. Ellenberger, a historian of psychiatric medicine, describes the way that he would mesmerize his patients as follows:

He would sit in front of his patients with his knees touching the patient's knees, pressing the patient's thumbs in his hands, looking fixedly into his eyes, then touching his hypochondria and making passes over his limbs. Many patients felt peculiar sensations or fell into crises. This was supposed to bring forth the cure.³¹

While the theory of a universal fluid pervading the universe never really gained any scientific credibility, the emphasis in Mesmer's approach on personal charisma has seeped into our language in the concept of being mesmerized. The process of mesmerizing one's patient as part of their psychological cure may have even anticipated the Freudian concept of the healing effect of the transference. If nothing else, however, it appears that Dr. E. Blatz inherited the personal charisma of his forefather and managed to transport its effects to Ontario.

³⁰ Jocelyn M. Raymond, *The Nursery World of Dr. Blatz* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 5.

³¹ Henri F. Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry* (New York: Basic Books, 1970), 62.

Dr. Blatz is remarkable as a twentieth century psychotherapist for his refusal to subscribe to any prevailing theory of mental health. He dismissed psychoanalytic theory because the emphasis on free association and interpretation in talk therapy was an easy way out in Blatz's view. He criticized the psychoanalytic couch as "an unhealthy way for people to talk around problems and thus escape the realities they needed to face".³² Rather than attempt to tame an all powerful emotional substratum of the unconscious, Blatz was almost existentialist in his common sense faith in the capacity of the conscious ego to make choices, problem solve and accept the consequences of its actions. Thus his pedagogy and therapy focused on the prescriptive structuring of a child's experience in such a way that healthy habit formation could be achieved. Blatz is quoted as having said about the more passive role of the psychoanalyst, "Non – directive. Non – effective".³³

However, like that of the original Mesmer, Blatz's own psychological theory was vague. He called it "Security Theory", which emphasized achieving a state of psychological serenity through a routine adjusted to the particular developmental stage of the child. If it had any scientific basis this was rooted in the functionalist theory of his mentors, Dr. Harvey A. Carr and James R. Angell at the University of Chicago (U of C) where Blatz completed his Ph.D. in psychology in the early 1920s. According to Richardson:

James R. Angell's orientation toward psychology corresponded in many ways to the program Blatz developed to child rearing. Angell used a concept similar to Adolf Meyer's psychobiology where he emphasized the "psychophysical" aspects of human action which viewed the body-mind continuum as a reciprocal relationship with "the process of habit". Blatz substantively continues along these lines of thought in his own development...Blatz's concern in the socialization process was with the development of wilful control and conscious thought as opposed to unconscious mental processes...His approach distinctly opposed psychoanalytical theory.³⁴

Much like his famous ancestor, rather than making any original contribution to psychological theory, Blatz relied on backing up his relatively common sense procedural advice with a charismatic presence that inspired confidence:

Blatz was indeed always able to establish a strong rapport between his patient and himself. Just as the force of his personality seemed to act as a healing magic with injured veterans or with otherwise inconsolably frightened children, his charisma carried over to his psychotherapy. Letters from patients substantiate this. A medical student wrote to Blatz: "I look to you as the most enhancing

³² Raymond, *The Nursery World of Dr. Blatz*, 150.

³³ Raymond, *The Nursery World of Dr. Blatz*, 151.

³⁴ Raymond, *The Nursery World of Dr. Blatz*, 122.

person I have ever met. I hope you think me not a foolish child because I really want you to know how grateful you have made me. You told me to make a decision about school next year ...”³⁵

Blatz utilized his powers of personal charisma to mesmerize not only his patients, but also the medico-educational establishment in Ontario who allowed him to dominate its institutions. Much as Seeley would also later impress himself upon this establishment through the Forest Hill Village Project, Blatz’s first foray was a research project in the schools of Toronto in the late twenties referred to as, the “Regal Road School Project”. In a personal interview, Ontario historian of psychiatry Cyril Greenland labelled the Regal Road Project a “poor man’s version of the Forest Hill Village Project”.³⁶

The Regal Road Project did not have the same extensive backing in terms of private or intergovernmental funding as would the Forest Hill Village Project, nor did it have as extensive U of T academic resources available to it. Instead, Rockefeller Funding was used to establish a U of T based laboratory nursery school first referred to as the Centre for Child Study. This centre was “charged with applying mental hygiene principles to children in school attendance with the expressed intention of ‘preventing mental and emotional disorders’”.³⁷ Dr. Blatz was appointed Director of the Centre for Child Study with a half time appointment in the Department of Psychology in order to lead the project.

Under the supervision of Dr. Blatz, the Regal Road Project sought to “make a longitudinal study of conduct deviations and adjustment of school children, primarily by way of observation; and to work out, through a testing program, the classification of the causes and possible treatment for maladjustments”.³⁸ These were the main goals of the Forest Hill Village Project as well, though in addition the latter project had grander aspirations to include in its mandate the testing of experimental pedagogical methods, the training of teachers and the reorganization of mental health institutions across Canada in order to achieve these same ends. Not only did the Regal Road Study serve as a launching pad for Blatz’s reputation amongst his sponsors at the Rockefeller Fund and mentors at the U of T, it also influenced the later shape of the Forest Hill Village Project, as we have already indicated, through the experience gained by Blatz’s principal assistants, William Line and Jack Griffin.

³⁵ Raymond, *The Nursery World of Dr. Blatz*, 154.

³⁶ Interview with Cyril Greenland, 14 November 2008.

³⁷ Richardson, *Century of the Child*, 117.

³⁸ Richardson, *Century of the Child*, 118.

What began as a Rockefeller funded Centre for Child Study under Blatz's supervision became institutionalized in 1925 at the U of T as the St George's Nursery School for Child Study. In 1996 it was reorganized as the Institute for Child Study Laboratory School associated with the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, which remains today as Blatz's legacy in the field of education in Ontario. The impact of Dr. Blatz can still be read into the emphasis on security in the school's approach to early childhood education as suggested in the following passage from its website:

The early foundations of the school's philosophy, a belief in inquiry and security for young children, remain central to the program at the Institute of Child Study Laboratory School.³⁹

Through his leadership of these institutions, not only did Blatz develop his own coterie of assistants who went on to broaden his influence, he himself became a household name in Canada as our equivalent Dr. Spock:

In addition to running the Institute of Child Study, William Blatz gave public lectures on the theme of 'Mental Hygiene of Childhood' in Toronto in the late 1920s. So popular were these lectures that Blatz was invited to give his talks in cities across the country.⁴⁰

In fact, Dr. Blatz had become so influential in the 1930s that, as the Head of the St. George's Nursery School, he was offered the opportunity to lead the infamous psychological experiment in early child rearing on the Dionne Quintuplets. Of course, it did not hurt that Dr. Blatz was a close personal friend and colleague of Toronto paediatrician Dr. William Dafoe. It was William's brother, Dr. Allan Dafoe, who had performed the miraculous midwifery that ensured the successful birth of the Dionne Quintuplets. Thus by personal connections, as much as by reputation, Blatz got the chance of a lifetime to make his mark in the annals of the history of psychology in Canada. His role in the Dionne Quintuplets story was highlighted by none other than Pierre Berton, the most famous of all Canadian popular historians, in *The Dionne Years: A Thirties Melodrama*. Unfortunately for the reputation of Dr. Blatz, the darker side of his security theory begins to be revealed in this infamous episode in Canadian social history.

In order to test his theory, Blatz would find himself participating in the cold clinical detachment of these poor girls from their normal family life, a blunder of psychological experimentation in child rearing from which the Quintuplets would never recover. For example, in order to ensure that they

³⁹ http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/ics/Laboratory_School/About_the_School/Lab_School_History.html, Nov 20th, 2010

⁴⁰ Mona Gleason, *Normalizing the Ideal: Psychology, Schooling, and the Family in Postwar Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 42.

could be subjected to optimal surveillance, both for clinical and commercial purposes, Blatz set up a one-way screen for viewing them at play:

Blatz set about at once to create a playground that was partially surrounded by the kind of one-way screens already in use at the St. George's School. The main feature of the design was corridor with fine wire mesh along one side. When the corridor was darkened, observers could see and hear the children in the day-lit playground. The presence of observers was not kept secret from the children; they could see the shadowy figures of lines of adults and hear their voices behind the wire netting.⁴¹

If this had not been enough to give the quintuplets nightmares, the segregation from their parents and siblings who lived in less clinical, and less opulent, surroundings on the family farm across the road certainly must have also played a part in their developmental difficulties. Not only were the children separated physically from their parents in order to be subjected all the more strictly to the optimal environmental conditions designed by Dr. Blatz, their mother was consistently forced into a secondary role to that of the nurses who were primarily responsible for the quintuplets' care. The nurses naturally defended their turf against outsiders, including the biological parents. The famous Freudian psychologist Alfred Adler commented on this situation in the March 1936 edition of *Cosmopolitan Magazine*:

Psychologically, the separation from their family is not an asset for the Quintuplets....The Quintuplets live like the inmates of a model orphanage, and a certain emotional starvation is inseparable from institutional life....Life in a glass house is not conducive to normal human development. Five little guppies living in a fish bowl may not be distracted by constant exposure. But babies are not fishes....There is danger ahead.⁴²

Yet Dr. Blatz was unapologetic about the separation of the twins from their parents and siblings for the purposes of his experiments. In general, he held the natural parenting skills of most adults in low regard. This is suggested in his revealing comments in favour of removing delinquent adolescents away from their families of origin:

When members of the Toronto Social Studies conference decided to remove a girl from her home, Blatz heartily approved of the idea. "If we could do what we want", he went so far as to say, "we would take them all away".⁴³

The work of Dr. Blatz with the Dionne Quintuplets captures the essence of his therapeutic style which was to subject those in his care to strict environmental controls designed to induce in them so called

⁴¹ Raymond, *The Nursery World of Dr. Blatz*, 110.

⁴² Pierre Burton, *The Dionne Year: A Thirties Melodrama* (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1977), 125-126.

⁴³ Raymond, *The Nursery World of Dr. Blatz*, 42.

optimal developmental and behavioural patterns. His obliviousness to the emotional context of therapy in favour of such a functional approach becomes quite clear when one considers what was done to the Dionne children under his supervision. The question this raises is whether or not such a focus on controlled conditions in the nursery, or the classroom, at the cost of interpersonal needs in relations with parents or teachers, is counterproductive, and even inhumane. The history of the Dionne Nursery conjures images of rats being studied in the laboratory through testing, surveillance and behavioural conditioning in order to assess what they are capable of. Indeed, this was what Blatz's interest in the quintuplets amounted to in so far as his research on them was designed to demonstrate the greater importance of environmental to genetic factors in learning processes. The opportunity to carry out such experimentation on five genetically identical girls was obviously irresistible to Dr. Blatz, even though the quintuplets were children, not rats.

Certainly, Foucault's warnings about the effects on people of the scientific disciplines should be heeded when considering the importance of Blatz's legacy on Ontario's system of education. How different indeed, were the Dionne Nursery or the St. George Nursery school, which as we have seen was also enclosed by a one-way mirror upon the instruction of Dr. Blatz, from the Benthamite Panopticon as described by Foucault? One may even ask whether the ICS laboratory school at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, which is supposed to set an example for the rest of the Ontario educational system even today, continues in the tradition Blatz established of clinical detachment, surveillance and experimentation with children that treats them more as instruments to be better fashioned for purposes of social utility, than as children with a need for social and creative freedom?

When one considers the long-term effects of Dionne Quintuplets' education, it would seem that such dark implications were sadly borne out. The girls were bedevilled throughout their lives by a history of failed relationships and health, in particular in their relations with their family of origin:

The Quintuplets left the family home upon turning 18 years old and had little contact with their parents thereafter. Émilie and Marie both died before reaching middle age. Marie had married Florian Houle before her death from a blood clot. Annette and Cécile went on to marry and have children (Cécile having twins Bertrand and Bruno), but both eventually divorced....

In 1995, the three surviving sisters revealed that they believed their father had sexually abused them during their teen-aged years. In 1997, the three surviving sisters wrote an open letter to the parents of the McCaughey septuplets, warning against allowing too much publicity for the children.⁴⁴

Indeed, it might not be too far a stretch to compare Blatz's fascination with the studies of twins, and his clinical detachment in the service of that end, to the similar interests of Dr. Mengele, who contemporaneously at Auschwitz also conducted controlled experiments on twins. The difference would be that Blatz focussed on environmental rather than hereditary issues, and the suffering of his subjects was more long-term, and much less deadly. But this comparison does raise questions as to whether or not the twin forces of nature and nurture should be so readily dichotomized. Were the meshed wires and the shadowy figures of Auschwitz really all that different from those that kept watch on the Dionne Quintuplets in Callander, North Ontario in the 1930s? If the same conditions prevailed in Ontario as had existed on the eastern front during World War II, would the outcomes also have been the same?

From this perspective, the institutionalization of Blatz's psychological leadership in Ontario and its long-term effects, according to Gleason, is reason for concern:

Like the Dionne Nursery, with its one-way mirror for psychological observation, St. George's nursery school, and later the Institute of Child Study, was promoted as a living laboratory in which the playing habits, temperaments, problem-solving skills and sociability of children were closely monitored by a team of psychologists in various stages of training. By 1946 the Institute's model nursery school became the governmental standard to which other such facilities had to measure up. According to the Ontario Day Nurseries Act, passed in that year, "each procedure on the timetable shall conform to the standards currently accepted by the Institute of Child Study of the University of Toronto". In the amended act of 1951, the statement appeared unchanged. The Institute of Child Study set the governmental standard regarding the emotionally normal or well child. Against this measuring stick teachers and parents were to compare their charges.⁴⁵

For our purposes the concerns raised by this evidence of the long-term impact of Blatz's work is that it shaped the institutional environment in the context of which the Forest Hill Village Project was conducted. Indeed, it became clear over the course of the Forest Hill Village Project that Seeley's objections to Blatz's approach were an important cause of tension between him and his superiors.

But how did Blatz manage to ingratiate himself to the psychiatric establishment in Toronto to such an extent that he was able to win the Fellowship at the U of C, the leadership of the Regal Road Project, and a Professorship at the U of T? No doubt he earned these positions on the basis of his success in

⁴⁴ *The Dionne Quintuplets*, Wikipedia.org, January 20, 2009.

⁴⁵ Gleason, *Normalizing the Ideal*, 47.

scholarly and clinical performances, but there is inevitably also a component of political skill, and good fortune, behind such achievements. We have seen how personal relationships played a key part in helping Blatz to getting the Dionne Quintuplets assignment. This may also have been the case in regard to the general progress of Blatz's career, I believe, if one considers the close personal and working relationship Blatz developed with his mentor at U of T, Edward Alexander Ned Bott. It was Ned Bott, the founder of the Department of Psychology at U of T in the early 1920s, who pushed forward the young Dr. Blatz's career.

ii) Canadian National Committee on Mental Hygiene

Prior to narrating the events in their personal lives that culminated in the close working relationship that developed between Bott and Blatz, it is first important to make a brief diversion into the history of the eugenics movement that was sweeping its way across North American medicine during the miserable years between the wars. Indeed, it is shocking to remember the extent to which, prior to World War II, the Nazi theory of race, which underlay the catastrophe of the Holocaust, was pervasive in European culture beyond Germany. Even that hero of British defiance against Nazism, Winston Churchill, was an active eugenicist.⁴⁶ This general environment of acceptance in regard to the scientific management of society, which manifested itself in the spread of ideologies like communism and Nazism, was also taken advantage of by the emerging social science disciplines of psychiatry and psychology.

Eugenicist social engineering programs provided a unifying ideological platform in the name of which the psychiatric elite in Toronto could justify their political activism during the early years of the twentieth century. Strictly speaking, eugenics called for the culling of the population at the biological level through the segregation, sterilization or deportation of undesirable elements like the mentally defective, or those who suffered from social diseases, like communism. As Agnes McPhail, the first female Member of Parliament, and an active eugenicist, put it in a 1935 speech to a meeting of the United Farm Women:

I just wonder how much longer we're going to allow sub-normal people to produce their kind. It is a blasphemy of the worst kind. You farmers – would you want the worse type of cattle to be seed-bearers?⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Angus McLaren, *Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885 – 1945* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1990), 23.

⁴⁷ McLaren, *Our Own Master Race*, 106.

Obviously, it was only medical doctors with psychiatric training who were qualified to perform the needed medical examinations prerequisite to sterilization measures. However, concomitantly with such medical techniques it was necessary to apply the softer science of psychological testing to determine who was to be culled from the schools, asylums, or immigration docks because of their so-called defects. This was where psychologists like Bott and Blatz found their place in the eugenics movement. In addition, where psychologists tended to stress environmental determinants of behaviour rather than inherited dispositions, as we have already seen in Dr. Blatz's nursery school experiments, this was seen not so much as a diversion, but rather as a supplement to eugenics programs. Whether by social or biological measures, the point was to achieve higher levels of social control, leading to the ever greater perfection of the human race. This important point is made clear by Angus McLaren in his history of the eugenics movement in Canada, *Our Own Master Race*:

The pioneering Canadian Child psychologists W. E. Blatz and E. A. Bott, for example, were attracted to behaviourist theories that held that the child's early environment played a crucial role in determining future mental health and economic productivity. Whereas the old-fashioned eugenicists were concerned with the incarceration and sterilization of the defective, the new generation of environmentalists were preoccupied with devising preventive programs that would pre-empt the very emergence of "abnormality"....It is important not to exaggerate the gap that separated the eugenicists and the environmentalists. Although their methods differed, their goals of efficient social management were similar.⁴⁸

The mutually reinforcing design of the psychiatrist's eugenicist projects, and the psychologist's environmentalist projects, was reflected in their political collaboration through the Canadian National Committee for Mental Health (CNCMH), predecessor to the currently active Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA). This national committee was used by the professions of psychiatry and psychology in Canada to raise their profile, power and income. The committee was formed in 1918, on the instruction of C. K. Clarke, then Chair of the Department of Psychiatry at U of T, Dean of the U of T Medical School, Superintendent of the Toronto General Hospital and Superintendent of the Toronto Hospital for the Insane. In other words, Clark was the big chief of the medical world in Toronto in the early part of the twentieth century. Clark assigned Dr. Clarence Hincks, who had worked for Clarke at the Toronto General psychiatric outpatients clinic from 1914 – 1918, the task of setting up a Canadian affiliate to the new National Committee on Mental Health in the United States. Clarke became the first medical director of the CNCMH and Hincks became the associate medical director, secretary and *de facto* leader and fundraiser for the new organization. E.A. Bott was also a founding member of the CNCMH along with Clarke and Hincks, as head of the psychology department at UT. In fact, Bott "was affiliated with every major mental hygiene activity which

⁴⁸ McLaren, *Our Own Master Race*, 112.

operated out of U of T until 1957,” according to McLaren.⁴⁹ Dr. Blatz was also an active member of the CNCMH, while it was Hincks in his role as leader of the organization who had arranged the funding and the appointment of Blatz as head of the St. George’s Nursery School, and as the Project Leader for the Regal Road Schools Study.⁵⁰

The unavoidable complicity of Dr’s Bott and Blatz with the eugenicist agenda of the CNCMH, given that they were such active members, can be even more clearly deduced from consideration of the full measure of priority attached to eugenicist programs by the leadership of the committee. Such priority was guaranteed by the domination of the committee by the U of T Department of Psychiatry. The successor to Clarke as head of the Department, Clarence Farrar had equally strong eugenicist credentials to his distinguished predecessor, as had the key subordinate whom they assigned to administer the programs of the CNCMH, Dr. Clarence Hincks. The imperious C. K. Clarke, after whom that imposing modernist monolith, the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry, is appropriately named, had seen to that.

Clarke was determined to stem the tide of what he saw as the overflow of the dregs of European society by various immigration schemes to Canada at the turn of the century. Perhaps the reactionary nature of his views in regard to immigration contained an irrational motive that could be linked to a trauma he suffered in the early days of his service as a psychiatrist at the Rockwood Asylum in Kingston, Ontario. On August 13th, 1885, a patient at Rockwood by name of Patrick Maloney, Irish of course, attacked Clarke and his colleague and brother-in-law Dr. William Metcalf with a knife. Metcalf was murdered but Clarke, gifted with an athleticism that would later carry him to victory in the Canadian Tennis Doubles Championship, was able to fight off the assailant. In any event, his political activism in the field of mental health did fixate on the threat posed by swarms of aliens poised at the borders of Canada ready to infect “the race as a whole”, to put it in his own terms.⁵¹ In particular, Clarke was concerned about immigration schemes for children like the Barnardo programs that brought British orphans to work on Canadian farms:

When we remember that fully fifty per cent of the admissions to our asylums are the outcome of bad heredity, we naturally pause when we endeavour to prophesy the result of the importation of a large number of degenerate children.⁵²

⁴⁹ McLaren, *Our Own Master Race*, 113.

⁵⁰ Raymond, *Nursery World of Dr. Blatz*, 31.

⁵¹ Ian Dowbiggin, *Keeping America Sane: Psychiatry and Eugenics in the United States and Canada, 1880 – 1940* (London: Cornell University Press, 1997), 140.

⁵² Dowbiggin, *Keeping America Sane*, 140.

Ironically, Seeley would arrive in Canada as one of the Barnardo children whom Clarke so feared. In any event, what was most frightening about Clarke's views was the breadth of his definition of feeble-mindedness and degeneracy. He extended these concepts to encompass not only physiological forms of mental illness but also to neurotic and even political behaviour. For example, surveys by Clarke of patients at the Psychiatric Clinic at the Toronto General Hospital, established very loose categories for the identification of defectives: "individuals typed as odd, disruptive, or immoral could be recommended for special classes, permanently institutionalized or deported in spite of an apparently normal intellect".⁵³ He was even ready to identify socialism as a symptom of mental illness. He spells this out in his unpublished novel, *The Amiable Moron*. Of course as a renaissance man, Clarke was not content to rest on his laurels as a Doctor, tennis player, and sometime violinist with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, so he also wrote a novel in his spare time which he had circulated amongst the members of the federal cabinet in 1919. In it Clarke explains the links he saw between immigration, psycho-pathology and bolshevism all dressed up in the scientific jargon of the time:

The centres of unrest are in the cities and no matter where the blame for the chaotic state of affairs in Canada today is placed, it is only too evident to students of sociology that undesirable immigration is one of the most potent causes of the disturbances. Bolshevism is not a new world disease, but merely a hot house product imported from the slum centres of Europe, where degeneracy has produced its inevitable results. The specimens of advocates of their doctrines we have met should never have been admitted to this country, as their influence for evil is difficult to estimate, although it is undoubtedly great. Certainly the ideals which have counted so much in the past in keeping this young country sane, and an example of virility, are in danger as a result of the type of immigration that has been fostered of late years. We have been nursing a reptile that may easily prove our undoing when it is fully developed.⁵⁴

One may wonder whose "undoing" in particular Clarke was referring to here, the Canadian people, or the upper class? In any case, these views explain the support he gave to the building of political action committee's of mental health professionals to promote eugenic measures to help prevent the spread of social diseases like bolshevism. In fact, Clarke's ally in this cause, Dr. Helen MacMurchy, officially Ontario's Inspector of the Feeble-Minded at the time, established a committee called, The Provincial Association for the Care of the Feeble-minded (PACFM) in 1912 to promote her calls for the segregation and sterilization of the mentally unfit through the establishment of a "major new facility for the feeble-minded".⁵⁵ As is so often the case in the history of mental health policy, MacMurchy may not have been in the best place to advocate for eugenics and family planning given

⁵³ McLaren, *Our Own Master Race*, 72.

⁵⁴ Dowbiggin, *Keeping America Sane*, 173.

⁵⁵ Dowbiggin, *Keeping America Sane*, 166.

that she herself was unmarried and childless. Indeed, as a gay woman at the time she might have easily found herself included amongst those she would herself label as “defective”.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, according to McLaren, quoting from her own official reports on “The Feeble Minded in Ontario”, Helen MacMurchy:

.... presented herself as a general in the “righteous war” against mental defectiveness. By 1914 she was describing the sorts of “big plans” with which she sought to remove this “destructive social force” as “eugenic” in nature. The mental defective according to MacMurchy, was a poison in the body politic, sapping its energy and undermining its efficiency....In 1908 MacMurchy optimistically asserted that 80% of feeble-mindedness could be eliminated within a generation by segregation, but the ultimate weapon in this battle was the sterilization of the feeble – minded. Arguing that the financial burdens of institutionalization would soon become crushing, she suggested that only by sterilization could the prevention of the reproduction of the mentally deficient be economically achieved.⁵⁷

Clarke later himself became the President of MacMurchy’s PACFM Committee to advance these ends. However, with the failure to achieve Provincial support for a new institution for the custodial segregation of the feeble-minded, and MacMurchy’s move to the Federal Civil Service, Clarke decided to rename it as the Canadian National Committee for Mental Health (CNCMH). According to Dowbiggin:

Of the thirty-seven Toronto members of the CNCMH in 1920, seventeen had been PACFM members, including Clarke.⁵⁸

With MacMurchy gone, Clarke turned to Dr. Clarence Hincks as his new operative for advancing policies of population control in Ontario. Hincks was more successful as an administrator than as a visionary like his father figure, C. K. Clarke. The personal mental struggles that Hincks himself dealt with, which we would today refer to as bi-polar disorder, seemed to suit his role as fundraiser and project coordinator. This work required frenzied periods of busy work that Hincks launched into during his manic episodes, but could easily be carried through by others when Hincks was forced to withdraw to his Muskoka cottage during long-lasting periods of depression. As further proof of the superficiality of Dr. Blatz’s methods, Hincks sought treatment from Canada’s version of the Great Mesmer. Of course, this seemed to only reinforce the vicious cycle of Hinck’s bipolar disorder by helping to bring him back to active duty, however briefly, on a more frequent basis. “Hincks was his

⁵⁶ Dowbiggin, *Keeping America Sane*, 162.

⁵⁷ McLaren, *Our Own Master Race*, 42.

⁵⁸ Dowbiggin, *Keeping America Sane*, 167.

senior, but when Hincks suffered his cyclical bouts of depression, it was usually Blatz he turned to for counsel”.⁵⁹

In any event, when he was able to work, Hincks was particularly successful in implementing Clarke’s agenda on two fronts, namely, by marshalling Ontario’s family compact behind the mental health movement, and by shifting the focus from immigration issues to the promotion of sterilization as a flagship issue behind which to rally support from the general populace for mental hygiene. There is no better evidence of the dominance of the social control agenda so plainly evident in Clarke’s original vision of the mental hygiene movement than the success Hincks had in winning grant after grant from wealthy local philanthropies like the Rockefeller Foundation of Cleveland, Ohio. Not only were the elite willing to give money, they were also willing to attach their names as board members of the CNCMH: “Hincks recruited to the board of the CNCMH Lord Shaunessy, President of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), E. W. Beatty, Vice-President of the CPR, Sir Vincent Meredith, President of the Bank of Montreal, and F. W. Molson, of Molson’s Brewery”.⁶⁰

Hinck’s consistent support for sterilization programs, and the elitism that lay behind his rationale for doing so, is captured in the following excerpt from an article he published in *Maclean’s* magazine. This article, boldly entitled “Sterilize the Unfit”, is especially shocking in light of the timing of its publication. He wrote it within a year of the end of the war, a time when the public was first being forced to face the horrors of the Holocaust:

Subnormality and mental unfitness seem to be on the increase in Canada...What’s more we can expect the percentage to mount unless we act soon to improve the mental quality of our stock. For the mentally unfit are apparently breeding faster than the fit, and will continue to do so until we prevent those with undesirable hereditary traits from passing their disabilities on to their children.

While stronger mental health and welfare programs are necessary for the prevention and treatment of mental disorders, these measures alone will only partially stem the rising tide of mental disabilities. Common sense and scientific judgement dictate a combined attack on mental health problems aimed at both constitutional and hereditary factors and environment. And this means amongst other things, selective eugenical sterilization.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Raymond, *Nursery World of Dr. Blatz*, 153.

⁶⁰ McLaren, *Our Own Master Race*, 110. (Ian Dowbiggin in, *Keeping America Sane*, has argued that, “The standard political interpretation that eugenics was a ruling class, reactionary, or conservative phenomenon is no longer tenable”. He suggests that ‘populist backing’ for eugenics and the support of proto-feminists like Agnes McPhail, “undermines the customary notion that it was a pet theory of the elite” He does not explain, however, why it is self-evident that the masses and feminists are always progressive)

⁶¹ Clarence Hincks, “Sterilize the Unfit”, *Maclean’s* (February 15, 1946).

One gets a strong sense from this passage that the threat is overstated, but this may have been deemed necessary to justify such extreme measures. Medical and military metaphors overlap here in the call for a “combined attack on mental health problems”. The reference to a “rising tide” of mental illness readily conjures associations to the frequently used metaphor of a red tide during the communist hysteria of the early cold war period, and may have harkened back to Clarke’s earlier attempts to associate problems of mental illness with the spread of communism. Hincks goes so far in this article as to suggest that “parenthood is undesirable” even for “neurotic individuals” prone by their “nervous make-up”, to, “transmit to their offspring a low threshold of resistance to neuroticism”. He defines neuroticism broadly enough to encompass people suffering from depression, anxiety, or hysterical reactions. He even includes “extreme fatigue” or, “feelings of inadequacy” in the class of dangerous neurotic symptoms. In other words, even if we allow his caution that only those with “very intense, prolonged and disabling” neuroses of these kinds should be sterilized, we might still worry that if these doctor’s orders were to be obeyed, we should all avoid having children. Of course, Hincks was writing at a time when psychopharmacological relief of such symptoms was not on the horizon. However, to seek to prevent unhappiness is one thing while it is quite another to rank people according to the quality of their “stock”, “fitness”, “defectiveness”, or “sub-normality”. These latter descriptors both reflected and reinforced a social hierarchy in the process of being re-defined in terms of health. Perhaps as soon after the war as 1946 the elite had already recognized that they could no longer justify the subjugation of the rest of the population on the grounds of race. However, health criteria such as intelligence, fitness, and normality might be more easily used to justify the oppression of what was deemed to be a lower class of people who were lacking in these attributes.

Yet up until the time of the war, it looked as though Hincks had backed the right horse by promoting sterilization programs across Canada. In British Columbia and Alberta, sterilization laws were enacted during the inter-war period, which Hincks lauded. Meanwhile at home in Ontario, Hincks and the CNCMH, in alliance with the newly formed Eugenics Society of Canada (ESC) led by Dr. H.A. Hutton, medical officer for the City of Brantford, helped to create a strong public movement in favour of sterilization during the Depression of the 1930s. Hincks, who of course became a prominent member of the Eugenics Society himself, worked with Hutton to win the support of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province Dr. H. A. Bruce, the Canadian Manufacturers Association, the Ontario Medical Association and innumerable city council’s across the province including Kitchener, Toronto, Belleville and Sault Ste. Marie. If it were not for the resistance of the Catholic Church, sterilization legislation would surely have passed in Ontario as it had in Western Canada. Nevertheless, the fact that the campaign did find particularly strong backing from the Ontario Medical

Association meant that even in the absence of legislation, sterilization procedures became a reality of life in the province. This was because the doctors had the power to implement sterilization as part of their professional practice without regard to the political situation. According to Hincks:

In the absence of legislation allowing for eugenic sterilization, many hospitals like the Hamilton General established their own policies. As early as 1928, members of the medical profession acknowledged that the Ontario government unofficially sanctioned sterilization.⁶²

Hutton agreed with Hincks' assessment that there was a widespread *de facto* use of the sterilization procedure by doctors in Ontario during the Depression:

Despite Legislative prohibitions, individual doctors were acting on their eugenic convictions. What lobbyists in Ontario were striving for in the 1930s was legislative legitimization for the practise already widespread in the province.⁶³

One other prominent doctor in Ontario whose support for eugenical sterilization at the time should be noted was Dr. John Griffin, assistant at the CNCMH to Dr. Hincks and his eventual successor. As we have seen already, Dr. Griffin would become a supervisor of John R. Seeley's work as the Director of the Forest Hill Village Project. Not surprisingly, Griffin is recorded as having promoted the same arguments that Hincks was parading around the province about the "rising tide" of mental ill health and the dangers associated with it. For example, Griffin was brought in along with many other speakers by Elizabeth Bagshaw, the active eugenicist doctor who served as the head of the Birth Control Society of Hamilton's clinic, to speak in support of sterilization and other measures to arrest the perceived growth of mental illness in the province. In his lecture to the Mental Hygiene Group of the University Women's Club given on January 21st 1938, Griffin issued a "warning that the mentally ill currently outnumbered university students".⁶⁴ Like Hincks and Hutton, Griffin also acknowledged the widespread use of sterilization by Doctors in Ontario without legislative authorization in an article published in 1940 in the *Canadian Public Health Journal*:

It is probable that sexual sterilization is occasionally performed in many centres in cases where medical or social reasons warrant it.⁶⁵

From this cursory review of the long-term interest of the leadership of the CNCMH in eugenics, it might be concluded that active members of the Committee like Bott and Blatz of the UT Department

⁶² Catherine Annau, "'Eager Eugenists': A Reappraisal of the Birth Control Society of Hamilton", *Social History* 27:53 (1994), 127.

⁶³ Annau, *Eager Eugenists*, 127.

⁶⁴ Annau, *Eager Eugenists*, 123.

⁶⁵ Annau, *Eager Eugenists*, 127.

of Psychology were at least not averse to such social control priorities and methods, even if their role as members of the Committee was to explore the effects of environmental conditioning. After all, Hincks had argued in the *Maclean's* article that environmental and genetic engineering programs were both needed to prevent the “rising tide” of mental defectiveness. It may be important to point out here as well, that though eugenics became unspeakable after the war, men like Griffin and Blatz who were active in the Committee during the hey-day of the sterilization campaign remained in leadership positions well into the 1960s. Griffin did not retire as head of the CMHA until 1971. Did their conservative instincts get suddenly re-directed in more democratic directions after the war, or more likely, were they still at work but in different dress?

iii) UT Department of Psychiatry

At this point, we still have not yet fully described the commitment of Ontario's psychiatric elite to eugenicist social control. As was the case at the time when the CNCMH was formed in 1918 on the instructions of C. K. Clark, the real power behind the Committee remained in the hands of the leadership of the UT Department of Psychiatry well into the post-war period. Historically, successors to Clarke's position have also been cross-appointed as head of the major psychiatric hospital in Toronto thus giving them more than merely academic influence. C. B. Farrar, Clark's successor as Head of the UT Department of Psychiatry was also appointed Director of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital, as was his successor after him, Dr. Aldwyn Stokes. When Stokes retired in 1967 the position became even more corporate with the appointment of Robyn Hunter as Chair of the UT Department of Psychiatry and CEO of the newly formed, and aggrandized, Clark Institute of Psychiatry. Today the tentacles of the UT Department of Psychiatry's control over social services in Metropolitan Toronto are spread so widely throughout the entire hospital system, it is impossible to readily describe. It is obvious however, that having control of hospitals as the institutions of first and last resort for clientele with psychological needs gave the UT Department of Psychiatry pre-eminence over other allied disciplines like psychology and social work. To understand the full extent of the commitment to eugenics in the medical establishment it is therefore important that we not restrict our view of its leadership to the political operatives at the CNCMH and the Eugenics Society of Canada. They were merely peons in Ontario's vast medical hierarchy.

The fact that Clarence Farrar had been trained in Heidelberg, Germany at Emil Kraepelin's pre-eminent psychiatric clinic only reinforced the importance of eugenics in Ontario. Representing the generally biological orientation of German psychiatry at the turn of the century, Kraepelin was opposed to Freud's theories, as was his student Farrar. Instead Kraepelin's clinic was committed to the

view that all mental health issues had physiological causes. Unfortunately, this biochemical orientation in German psychiatry led to an interest in the genetic origins of mental illness which in turn translated into support from psychiatrists on both sides of the Atlantic for eugenicist programs. In fact, another of Kraepelin's pupils, Ernst Rudin, became a leading figure in Nazi sterilization programs as the author of the official commentary on the implementation in Germany of the 1933 "Law for Prevention of Hereditary Diseased Offspring". Farrar brought the prejudice in favour of biological psychiatry that he had learned at Kraepelin's clinic in Germany back with him to Toronto. Just after arriving in Toronto, Farrar advocated at a meeting of the Children's Aid Society, "the complete sterilization of mental deficients to prevent procreation of mental defectives".⁶⁶

No wonder Farrar, like Hincks, was so quick to join the Eugenics Society of Canada (ESC) when it was formed in 1930. According to McLaren, Farrar had, "declared himself willing to lose one potential genius if ninety-nine defectives were also eliminated" through sterilization programs. Farrar also believed that sterilization could be justified on economic grounds citing the example of "impoverished parents of an already considerable family, particularly if of inferior stock, who must constantly depend upon charity, and with whom birth control technique is impracticable".⁶⁷ The elitist, or class, foundations of the arguments advanced by Clarke, Hincks, and Farrar for eugenic programs are revealed in the use of descriptive language like "unfitness", "inferiority", and "stock" with reference to those who ought to be sterilized. This language gets reversed into the more acceptable terminology of intelligence, character, and health after the war. In addition, the programs advocated moved from eugenic sterilization to psychoanalytical education in the immediate post-war period with the Forest Hill Village Project, but the question that is raised by such historical reversals in form is whether or not they reflected a change in substance. Did the dawn of psychoanalytic pedagogy with the new reign of Englishman Aldwyn Stokes as Chair of the UT Department of Psychiatry suggest a relinquishing of the social control agenda that had traditionally emanated from this powerful position, or did it merely signal a change in strategy and tactics?

Given his bio-chemical approach to psychiatry, it is not surprising that Farrar was very sceptical of psychoanalysis. In fact, Farrar is quoted as having said that "the shadows of Freud linger as the last touch of mysticism in medicine".⁶⁸ He lobbied to ensure that his successor at the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital shared his views. Though he had not favoured the candidate who was eventually successful

⁶⁶ Edward Shorter ed., *TPH: History and Memories of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital, 1925 – 1966* (Toronto: Wall and Emerson Inc., 1996), 84.

⁶⁷ McLaren, *Our Own Master Race*, 119.

⁶⁸ Shorter, *History and Memories of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital*, 86.

because he was too liberal, Farrar may not in the end have been all that disappointed in Stokes who does not seem to have completely shed the eugenicist ideology that must have pervaded his own training. During the formative years of Stokes' career at the Maudsley Psychiatric Hospital in London, England during the 1930s and 40s he would have been subjected to the eugenicist views that were held at the highest reaches of that institution. According to Pauline Mazmdar in her book, *Eugenics, Human Genetics and Human Failings: The Eugenics Society, Its Sources and its Critics in Britain*, the Maudsley had a longstanding institutional relationship with Kraepelin's clinic in Germany, not to mention with Rockefeller funding from the United States. She concludes that it provided institutional support for the eugenics movement in Britain prior to the war:

The Maudsley Hospital, too, had been an institution that could be counted on: its connections with the Kraepelin clinic in Munich had been maintained from the days of Henry Maudsley to those of Sir Aubrey Lewis.⁶⁹

After World War I, the Maudsley had emerged as a bastion of medical experimentation and treatment in regard to the psychiatric casualties of war. Stokes rose through the ranks of the Hospital to the role of Medical Superintendent working alongside Aubrey Lewis as Clinical Director and Professor of Psychiatry. Under the leadership of Stokes and Lewis, the institution inclined toward traditionally medical approaches to dealing with psychiatric problems in contrast to its principal competitor, the Tavistock Clinic. Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung themselves were associated with the Tavistock and it produced such leaders of avant-garde British psychoanalysis as John Bowlby and Wilfred Bion. The leading academic lights at the Maudsley, like Lewis and his personal friend and colleague C. P. Blacker, on the other hand, were active members of the British Eugenics Society. In fact, Blacker was the General Secretary of the English Eugenics Society from 1931 – 1952 and Lewis was a Vice-President of the Society alongside a group of other illustrious Englishmen like John Maynard Keynes.⁷⁰ They were respectful but sceptical about psychoanalysis as a treatment modality, an attitude which Stokes himself would maintain throughout his career.⁷¹ Douglas Frayn, a distinguished psychoanalyst in Toronto, remembers that much later in the 1960s, upon his first encounter with Stokes at the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry, the latter quipped something to the effect

⁶⁹ Pauline M. H. Mazmdar, *Eugenics, Human Genetics and Human Failings: The Eugenics Society, Its Sources and its critics in Britain*, (London, Routledge, 1992) 180

⁷⁰ "Annual Meeting and Election of Officers and Council": *Eugenics Review*, 1944 July:36(2): 52-58. <http://europepmc.org/articles/PMC2986150/pdf/eugenrev00256-0014.pdf>

⁷¹ Louise Ellis, "'Aldwyn Stokes': The Man and his Contribution to Canadian Psychiatry". *Canadian Psychiatric Association Bulletin*, (April 2000), 1.

of, “So you are to be the resident psychoanalyst in the Department of Psychiatry eh? Well, I suppose it is good to have one psychoanalyst in the Department, but only one.”⁷²

Despite Stokes claim to open-mindedness regarding psychoanalysis, one knowledgeable observer, Toronto Psychoanalyst Peter Thompson has written that: “I have always been uncertain as to the degree that Aldwyn Stokes encouraged or discouraged the development of psychoanalysis in Toronto. Stokes always held his cards very close to his vest. I think he was ambivalent on the whole”.⁷³ Thompson bases this opinion on a letter written by Stokes to Dr. Boulanger, Director of the Canadian Psychoanalytic Society in 1958, in which Stokes takes the position that any psychoanalytic practise should be under the supervision of the U of T, Department of Psychiatry. Quite a bit earlier than this, in the midst of the Forest Hill Village Project’s operations, Stokes had made his position on this issue already quite clear in correspondence with Dr. Ewan Cameron, head of Psychiatry at McGill University. He wrote to Cameron warning that: “the opportunity in Canada of avoiding extra University training centres of sectarian movements seems to be threatened” by the forming of a Canadian Society of Psychoanalysis in Montreal.⁷⁴

It is worth pointing out again here that this is the Dr. Cameron whom we have seen was most famous for his secretive application of CIA funds in mind control experiments on his patients. These “depatterning” experiments on patients involved isolation, sensory deprivation, massive electroshock therapy and the use of immobilizing drugs, “all in order to facilitate their receptivity to driving statements”.⁷⁵ These, “driving statements”, were repetitive restatements of psychologically provocative ideas in the hope of breaking down the patient’s resistance to them. It is a scene of psychiatric experimentation reminiscent of Orwell’s description of the rat torture imposed on Winston in room 101. The fact that the story of Cameron’s “depatterning” experiments in Montreal is set historically alongside the eugenicist interests of the UT Department of Psychiatry certainly casts a dark light on the extremes to which the medical elite in Canada were willing to go in their social engineering experiments at this time.

The absence of treatment alternatives may help to explain the aggressive experimentation of these early pioneers in the mental health field. Stokes’ mentor at the Maudsley, Aubrey Lewis, “was

⁷² Interview with Douglas Frayn, 20 October 2009.

⁷³ Douglas Frayn, *Psychoanalysis in Toronto* (Toronto: Ash Publications, 2000), 14.

⁷⁴ Stokes to Cameron, 5 March 1952. University of Toronto Archives, Department of Psychiatry Fonds, A 1986-0032, Box 3, File 55.

⁷⁵ Harvey Weinstein, *A Father, A Son and the CIA*. (Toronto: James Lortimer & Co, 1988), 118.

attracted to prevention through voluntary sterilization of families with an established history of major mental illness". Yet Lewis did object when, "eugenic ideas had been hi-jacked by the Nazi Party to pursue overt racial discrimination".⁷⁶ On the question of eugenics, Nazi abuses pitted Lewis's class identifications as an aspiring member of the British aristocracy against his ethnic identity as a Jew. However, such conflicts would not have bothered either his friend C. P. Blacker or his colleague Aldwyn Stokes. Indeed, the elitism that was natural to Blacker as a graduate of Eton, Oxford and Guard's may have been what attracted Lewis to befriend him and to support his work on eugenics at the Maudsley. As for Stokes, eugenics may have had a class appeal to him as well because he, like Lewis, was of lower middle class origins and thus an aspirant after respectable class status in English society. Lewis's father was a poor Jewish watchmaker in Australia, and Stokes father was a clerk in a Welsh law office. The careers of both Lewis and Stokes had ridden the waves of philanthropic scholarships from Oxford and the Rockefeller Fund to great heights on the basis of their work-ethic, intelligence, and undoubtedly their conformity to the class expectations that came along with the money. Perhaps then, through the exposure to the eugenicist enthusiasms of his colleagues at the Maudsley, Stokes may have internalized some of its ideals. The premise in eugenic theory of the natural superiority of one class of human beings in comparison to another would have inevitably appealed to men like Stokes and Lewis who shared a need for signs of distinction.

It is therefore not surprising to see that Dr. Stokes would engage in speculation on eugenic methods of social control even after the experience of the war, however cautiously. In an article he presented to an Ontario Nursing Association Meeting on September 10th, 1948 in Orillia entitled "Eugenic Aspects of Social Psychiatry", Stokes shows that he was not in principal opposed to sterilization. In the following passage from this presentation he states his position:

Sterilization on a compulsory basis has probably been most thoroughgoing in respect to the social problem groups. Genetic reasons here give way to social urgency which demands the use of practical measures and which cannot wait on further development of the academic theories of heredity. A sterilization measure of this sort approaches to a punitive procedure: it may or may not be justified according to an unbiased appraisal of results.⁷⁷

It seems that Stokes was a consummate politician always attempting in a Mackenzie-King like fashion to straddle the boundary lines of controversy. However, from the perspective of our time, the

⁷⁶ Edgar Jones, "Aubrey Lewis, Edward Mapother and the Maudsley". *Medical History* (22) 2003, 33.

⁷⁷ Aldwyn Stokes, "Eugenic Aspects of Social Psychiatry", September 10, 1948. University of Toronto Archives, Department of Psychiatry Fonds, A 1986-0032, Box 3, File 55.

utilitarian position he takes on eugenic sterilization may leave too much room for the abuse of medical power.

The point of this digression is to demonstrate the sympathy towards eugenics of those at the highest reaches of medical psychiatry in Ontario in the thirties and forties. Indeed, it is no surprise that men with such a vested interest in their own exalted position within the hierarchy of Ontario's medical system, and in tandem its class structure, would incline toward a medical model that naturalized such social ranking systems. Naturalization lent legitimacy to their rule over the medical world. Eugenics also must have appealed to them as a mechanism by which the quality and quantity of the general population could be subjected to some form of control by ostensibly medical rather than political means. Further, it follows that those lower in the hierarchy at the time, like Bott and Blatz in the UT Department of Psychology were also sympathetic to the eugenicist and associated class goals of their superiors. This would have been necessary because political operators like Stokes and Griffin with such well trained psychological acumen could have easily smelled out any form of real dissent, and because the extent of commitment to corporate programs is always a key measure of success within any hierarchical system. Of course, despite their psychological acumen and corporatist propaganda, the medical hierarchy failed to detect the danger that lurked amongst them in the form of Jack Seeley; but then, he was quite a different kind of cat than either Ned Bott or William Blatz.

iv) U of T Department of Psychology

As a young medical student at the U of T, Blatz literally bumped into Bott after having been rejected in his application to serve in the Canadian armed forces during WWI because of his German background: "Bott liked to tell the story of how he met this young medical student wandering disconsolately across the campus because he had to be turned back at the gangplank of a troopship in Halifax Harbour due to his German sounding name".⁷⁸ This was the first thing the two men held in common as Bott had also been rejected from service because of his poor eyesight. This was not a ruse to cover for suspicion in regard to the Germanic origins of the name Bott, which is in fact a common German name. There was no question that Ned Bott was of Scottish descent by way of the West Indies. Bott and Blatz bonded through their work together in the rehabilitation of soldiers returning from war in a laboratory Bott set up at Hart House on the U of T Campus in 1917. Given the ensuing activism on Bott's part in support of Blatz's application to U of C to do his Ph. D. in psychology, and then also in hiring Blatz as a member of the newly founded Department of Psychology at the U of T, it may be inferred that the two men had found common ground in this first

⁷⁸ Wright and Myers ed., *History of Academic Psychology in Canada* (Toronto: Hogrefe Press, 1982), 99.

experience working together. Indeed, they did both share an interest in learning processes, and a fascination with the apparatus of psychological experimentation. They also shared a disdain for speculative psychology.

Bott's preference for practical psychology was attested to in his failure to pass his Ph. D. in the Philosophy Department on the scientific nature of pre – Socratic philosophy. He failed, reputedly, because he did not attend to the department's priorities on the reading of classical texts in the original Greek. Naturally, Bott gravitated to the teaching of applied psychology courses at U of T. His courses were so successful that he was able to break out of the Philosophy Department, where he did not fit in, and establish the Department of Psychology as an official discipline at the University. He made his academic reputation with the publication of such articles as "Mechanotherapy" based on his experience working with Veterans. The need of veterans to relearn the use of limbs, and achieve mastery in the use of prosthetic devices, only confirmed for Bott the utility of his natural predilection for gadgets. For his part, the appeal of practical psychology to Blatz is already evident in his Ph. D. research at U of C based on the measurement of the nervous responses of persons subjected to the sudden collapse of a chair beneath them. The elements of control and cruelty that might be detected in the sorts of psychological applications sought out by Bott and Blatz, might easily be dismissed, were it not for the evidence that these men shared a cultural proclivity for social aggression.

Blatz's ethnically German family was originally from Alsace Lorraine, a notoriously anti-semitic region of central Europe. For Reva Gerstein, a Jewish graduate student at U of T who had already suffered enough in her academic program from the effects of anti-semitism, this aspect of his Germanic background became problematic. Dr. Blatz had become the supervisor of her Ph. D. program in psychology when his colleague Dr. Bill Line went into the army during World War II. She had loved Bill Line as her supervisor because he was a warm, if occasionally drunken, professor. The anti-semitism of Dr. Blatz however, often shocked and discomfited her. For example, when she appeared in the Senate to defend her thesis on psychological testing, Dr. Blatz asked her, "Do you think the Jews are a superior race"?⁷⁹ She was taken aback, and did not know exactly what to say. She merely answered "No" with a slight tone of surprise, as if to suggest, "What does that have to do with anything"? Upon reflection, however, Dr. Gerstein suggested that she should not have been surprised. During her academic studies at U of T she had often been confronted with obstacles based on her Jewish heritage such as not being allowed to take calculus, or being forced to attend University College as the only U of T College that admitted Jews. She also remembered that her marks were

⁷⁹ Interview with Reva Gerstein, 20 August 2008.

deliberately lowered from an earned A average to a B because she was a Jew, and that she had had difficulty in arranging an internship at a hospital for research purposes because it was government policy in the 1930s not to allow Jewish interns. Thus Dr. Blatz's anti-semitism was not entirely unusual for its time, but it may reveal something about the nature of his affinity with the Bott family.

Ned Bott's father, George A. Bott was born in 1841 on Tortolla Island, part of the British Virgin Islands. George's father, and Ned's grandfather, Alexander Bott (Jr.) was an Anglican Reverend on the Island who, amongst his other pastoral duties, taught the black children of the local slaves on which the economy of the island depended. It should be noted that the Anglican Church was complicit in the slave economy of the British Virgin Islands and has since apologized for its role. According to a visitor to the Island investigating the conditions of the blacks after emancipation in 1834, Reverend Bott was "pious" in carrying out his duties:

One of our first visits was to a school for black children under the care of Alexander Bott, the pious minister of the parish church. It was in good order – the children answered our questions well.⁸⁰

George A. Bott had moved to Oxford County, Ontario to work as a farmer not long after his father's untimely death in 1849. This family tragedy, combined with the social turmoil which beset the island during these times after the transition from traditional to wage slavery, may explain their emigration from Tortolla along with most of the rest of the white population of the Island by 1853. Prior to their departure to the most northerly of the British Colonies, the Bott Family's roots in the slave economy of the Carribean had been quite deep. The first of the "Bott Pedigree" to arrive in Antigua was John Bott who died on the Island in 1798. Alexander Bott Jr's father, that is Ned Bott's great grandfather, Alexander Bott (Sr.) who died in Antigua in 1820, was a major slave owner on the island. The names of his slaves are listed by the hundreds on the "Slave Register of Former British Colonial Dependencies, 1812 – 1834".⁸¹ In fact, it may be conjectured that that the nick name "Ned" given to Dr. Bott of Ontario, was borrowed from some of the favourite slaves of his great grandfather, many of whose identity in the slave registry was recorded simply as "Ned Ned".

My point in this brief excursion into the Bott family history as slave-owners in the Carribean is to suggest that the comfort of Ned Bott with the eugenicist ideology of the CNCMH was come by honestly given his unavoidable immersion in the racist attitudes of his family and culture. I would

⁸⁰ William Ellery Channing, *Complete Works of W. E. Channing* (London: Christian Life Publishing Company, 1884), 573.

⁸¹ Office of Registry of Colonial Slaves and Slave Compensation Commission: Records, The National Archives Microfilm Collection T71, The National Archives of the UK, Kew, Surrey, England.

also suggest that such attitudes are not dissimilar to the kind of anti-semitism which was bred into German families like the Blatz's from Alsace Lorraine. Perhaps it was this commonality of cultural perspective, in part, that led to the closeness of the Blatz and the Bott families. This was manifested not only in the crucial support of Ned Bott for Blatz's career, but also in the collaboration of Dr. Blatz with Dr. Bott's wife, Helen McMurchie Bott at St. Georges Nursery School, and their joint publication of a number of studies based on their work together.

This story of the relationship of Dr. Blatz and Dr. Bott in early twentieth century Ontario, which has been spun out of a look at Teresa Richardson's influential overview of the institutional and personnel precursors to Seeley, helps us to establish the context for the emergence onto the mental health scene after World War II of John R. Seeley. The obsession with social engineering projects amongst Ontario's medical elite during the period between the wars helps to explain the substantial investment they were willing to make in Seeley's ambitious brainchild, the Forest Hill Village Project. At the same time, seeing the socio-cultural underpinnings of the Ontario elite's interest in eugenics, and corollary social control programs, also helps to explain the vitriolic feelings of betrayal on their part when it became clear that Seeley did not really share their agenda. His early sycophancy toward his superiors belied a fundamental cleavage of interest and perspective between him and men like Dr's Aldwyn Stokes, John Griffin, and William Blatz. The intellectual boundary that marked this difference of opinion between Seeley and his patrons was the question of psychoanalysis.

Stokes, Blatz and Griffin were likely suspicious of psychoanalysis because of its associations to leftist politics and Judaism. As pointed out earlier in reference to Reva Gerstein's testimony, a subtle level of anti-semitism had pervaded the medical hierarchy in Ontario until the war and it would have been impossible for these men, as political leaders within the system, not to be cautious in their approach to allowing the promotion of Jews in the system. According to Seeley himself, the Faculty of Medicine at U of T, even in the period just after the war, enforced quotas on the number of psychiatrists who could be Jews. Seeley said that this was the case because the prevailing view was that the Department of Psychiatry, "shouldn't have too many Jews lest it cause issues". Seeley dismissed these unofficial quotas as "all part of the politics of psychoanalysis at the time".⁸² Seeley's observation of "unofficial quota's" with reference to professors is supported by documentary research that shows that discussions took place at the highest level of the University about quotas on Jewish students allowed into the Faculty of Medicine at U of T, even into the 1950s. The following is an

⁸² Interview with John R. Seeley, 25th November 2007

excerpt from a memorandum written by the U of T Registrar Robin Ross to the President, Claude T. Bissel in 1959:

....there is a definite limitation imposed by the Selection Committee on the number of Jewish students whom they are prepared to accept in the pre-medical Years....In most cases it was quite unrealistic to argue that the rejected candidates were refused on any other grounds than that they were Jewish. Whatever the practical difficulties may be, I think that this should stop.⁸³

Even though such political pressure existed at the time, Stokes was enlightened enough to hire the first psychoanalytically oriented Jewish psychiatrist into the UT Department of Psychiatry in the person of none other than Dr. Martin Fischer. Yet as we know, Stokes was likely only interested in Fischer as a token Jewish psychiatrist with an interest in psychoanalysis in order to demonstrate his commitment to a multi-disciplinary approach. Moreover, though apparently Dr. Fischer loved Dr. Stokes out of an over-riding sense of duty for the favour that Stokes had bestowed upon him, his wife Beatrice never trusted Stokes because of what she had “heard about him”.⁸⁴ This is not to suggest that Stokes could be accused of overt anti-semitism. Stokes was indeed a gentleman. Rather, the point is that Jewish professionals in the medical field like Seeley, Fischer and Gerstein felt that Stokes and the other members of the Gentile establishment were the enforcers of the unofficial quotas. In other words, like the concentration camp guards they might claim to be innocent because they were just following orders; or because they held nothing personal against Jews; or because the orders weren't even written down anywhere and therefore didn't really exist; but Seeley, Fischer, Gerstein and other Jews like them knew who their enemy was. They may not have been able to distinguish between who up there was seriously anti-semitic and who was just following orders, but they knew enough to be suspicious and afraid of anyone who was part of the Gentile establishment.

Assuming that Stokes and his colleagues at the heights of the psychiatric hierarchy in Ontario might have been perceived as anti-Semitic on political rather than racist grounds, it might be conjectured that they were were willing to risk the dangers of associating themselves with psychoanalysis because they felt that it might be reframed to offer an alternative, more politically palatable, route by which to advance their interests in population control. The war had stripped the last vestiges of legitimacy from eugenics so they needed a new principle of scientific legitimacy as a pretext for the pursuit of their interests on this question. For Seeley, on the other hand, psychoanalysis was a revolutionary

⁸³ Charles Levi, ““There is a definite limitation imposed (Robin Ross to Claude Bissel, December 4th, 1959) The Jewish Quota in the Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto”: Generational Memory Sustained in Documentation”. *Historical Studies in Education*, Research Note, Spring 2003
http://historicalstudiesineducation.ca/index.php/edu_hse-rhe/article/view/477/657 June 2nd, 2013.

⁸⁴ Interview with Beatrice Fischer, 21 October, 2008.

doctrine, not a method for public pacification. He was more likely to support the revisionist Marcusean version of psychoanalysis as part of the “Great Refusal” than to see in it a tool for some Cold War version of mind control.⁸⁵ Seeley was a forerunner of the sixties. Yet the conservative doctors, Stokes, Blatz, Griffin and the rest, did not realize this when they hired Seeley onto the Executive of the CNCMH and welcomed him into the corridors of power at the UT Departments of Psychiatry and Psychology. They did not know that there was to be another Jew in their midst. This oversight, or even self-deception, created the space for a fissure of ethnic, intellectual and bureaucratic interests that would in the end lead to Seeley’s ostracism from the mental health movement in Ontario.

3. The Historians

i) Brian Low

We turn next from an exploration of the historical context of Seeley’s career to the existing historiography concerning the particular role Seeley played as a member of the mental hygiene movement. Surprisingly, though Seeley has never received much historical attention, we find where he does it is as a minor, but heroic leader. He is portrayed as being welcomed into the elite company of medical psychiatry in Ontario as a promising new bright light. His claim to fame is recognized as having been the publication of *Crestwood Heights* in 1956, based on his leadership of the UT Department of Psychiatry sponsored Forest Hill Village Project. This book reputedly brought honour and publicity to the campaign, and set Seeley off in the direction of a successful academic career as a sociologist. However, there is already some recognition amongst historians who have cast glances in Seeley’s direction that his success was not based so much on his positive achievements, but rather on his critique of emerging problems in the field of mental hygiene. It will become clearer as this study progresses that these earlier historians of Ontario’s mental hygiene movement did not recognize the full extent of the clash between Seeley and higher powers.

Brian J. Low offers one of these rare historical glimpses into Seeley’s career in the context of his study of the role of Rockefeller Funding in the mental hygiene movement. Indeed, Low’s opinion of Seeley’s importance to the movement may help to justify the careful attention that is being given to his role in the present study:

⁸⁵ Hebert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* (Boston: Bacon Press, 1955), 149.

John Seeley's career is deserving of more careful scrutiny by Canadian social historians. He was involved in several projects on behalf of the mental hygiene movement in Canada, including *Crestwood Heights* and NFB film productions of the early 1950s. Less conspicuously, he received acknowledgement from David Riesman as a consultant for his landmark work, *The Lonely Crowd* (1950), which links Seeley to that bastion of the mental hygienists – Yale University – at a particularly heady time for the movement.⁸⁶

Low makes the argument that Seeley's major contribution to the mental hygiene movement was to show that, by the early 1950s at least, there had not been any significant gains in mental health for the children of Forest Hill. This was remarkable, Seeley pointed out, in light of all the attention to mental health issues that the devoted parents of this upper class community had been able to muster in the postwar era, including their active support of the Forest Hill Village Project. Rather, Seeley argued that the evidence gathered during the project had shown a surprising drift toward feelings of parental disempowerment and demoralization in Forest Hill as a result of the mental hygiene approach to education:

Even J.R. Seeley, a major architect of the Canadian Mental Health Project had admitted by 1959 to this unanticipated problem: "One finds parents convinced of their impotence, clinging to doctrine in the face of confronting fact-at-hand, robbed of spontaneity (or, equivalently, forcing themselves as a routine to 'be spontaneous'), guilt-ridden, dubious about their own discriminatory capacity, in double tutelage-to the child himself and to his agent, the 'expert' - penetrable, defenseless, credulous, and sure only that, while it doth not yet appear, the day of salvation is at hand".⁸⁷

Low attributes this failure of the Forest Hill Village Project and the Mental Health movement in general to the weak scientific basis of its pedagogy. Low is particularly harsh with regards to the scientific validity of Freudian theory which Seeley had attempted to emphasize in Forest Hill. He points to the confessions of Anna Freud herself as proof that psychoanalytically inspired pedagogy could be dismissed as a purely speculative effort that served other, more political, interests rather than having any scientific merit:

As Anna Freud admitted in 1937, "After years of intensive work...we are certain only that there still exists no practicable psychoanalytic pedagogy".⁸⁸

According to Low, the Rockefeller funding (that was so important to the programs of the CNCMH and to the careers of its leaders including Hincks, Blatz, Griffin, and Line) came with strings attached. He suggests that the mental hygiene movement accentuated those aspects of psychoanalytic theory

⁸⁶ Brian J. Low, "'The Hand that Rocked the Cradle': A Critical Analysis of Rockefeller Philanthropic Funding, 1920-1960", *Historical Studies in Education* 16, 1 (2004), 33-62.

⁸⁷ Low, "The Hand that Rocked the Cradle", 51.

⁸⁸ Low, "The Hand that Rocked the Cradle", 51.

that were consistent with the progressive educational tendency to encourage, “less authoritarian teaching practises and greater emphasis on satisfying children’s needs”.⁸⁹ But Low suspects more than emancipatory motivations behind such educational psychology. He points out that the likely effect of such an approach would be to undermine parental powers while at the same time enhancing the susceptibility of youth to expert, peer and media influence:

The evidence suggested that if parents and teachers were to follow the hygienists advice *en bloc*, the potential existed for a new generation to appear that would be more willful in character, less inhibited, and more peer cohesive than ever in the past, a generation lacking a sense of personal freedom and thus likely – as American psychologist Hilda Buch saw it in 1952 – to be helpless prey to outer influences, insecure and dependent on others, like leaves in the wind.⁹⁰

This countervailing pressure against natural parental tendencies to set limits upon the narcissistic demands of their children was designed, according to Low, to create a generation susceptible to corporate interests. In order to defend this thesis, Low points out that at the same time as Rockefeller Philanthropy was throwing money at the movement for better mental health in schools, it was also investing massively in the new communications fields opened up by changing media technology. Low suggests that these two efforts were mutually reinforcing. While, the mental hygiene movement was working to create a malleable audience for the media to work with, the communications technology field was working to develop ever more sophisticated means by which to take over the educational function that had formerly been in the hands of teachers and parents.

By transplanting its funding to mass communications research (and assured of a trend of diminished control of parents and teachers over the socialization of children) Rockefeller philanthropy had made it conceivable by the 1960s to manage attitudes and predispositions within society on a massive scale through the national mass media.⁹¹

Despite the persuasiveness of Low’s argument, and the clear linkage he establishes at another level of analysis between the mental health movement and the class interests of its elite proponents, he may be a bit one-sided in his consideration of the role of psychoanalytic pedagogy in all of this. Seeley would not have agreed with Low in regard to the indoctrination function of psychoanalysis. He saw it as a revolutionary force. The question is whether the rebelliousness of the sixties didn’t unknowingly play into the hands of corporate interests, and therefore Seeley was backing the wrong horse. Ironically, if we follow Low’s analysis, the real emancipatory potential of psychoanalysis at the time lay in its identification of the need to set educational limits on outbreaks of mass narcissism. As

⁸⁹ Low, “The Hand that Rocked the Cradle”, 53.

⁹⁰ Low, “The Hand that Rocked the Cradle”, 56.

⁹¹ Low, “The Hand that Rocked the Cradle”, 61.

Anna Freud observed in *Psychoanalysis for Parents and Teachers*, a psychoanalytically informed education would seek to find a “via media” between the benefits of rewarding the child’s freedom of expression, and the need to set limits upon their narcissistic tendencies.⁹² In fact, Low himself links Seeley to the late Freudians who were amongst the few participants in the development of psychoanalytic pedagogy that articulated concern about the absence of limit – setting and structure in the educational strategies emerging from the mental hygiene movement:

....several European child psychoanalysts who were involved in the movement for psychoanalytic pedagogy, many in the United States by the 1940’s ‘now wrote criticisms of American progressive education for its overindulgence of children and its lack of structure and limits....they carefully detached psychoanalysis from permissive attitudes and practises in child rearing and education.’...In Canada, concerns with democratic parenting and schooling practises first became evident to a group of mental hygiene researchers working under the direction of John R. Seeley in the Toronto suburb of Forest Hill.⁹³

Thus, there appears to be some level of inconsistency in the picture Low paints of Seeley as a hero of the mental hygiene movement. On the one hand, Low appropriately credits Seeley with articulating a viable critique of the mental hygiene movement on the basis of his commitment to psychoanalytic pedagogy, even as he continued to work within the general parameters of the movement. Low explicitly points out that Seeley’s critique was intended to buttress the work of mental hygiene, not to destroy it, whatever the eventual outcome: “Seeley and most of the researchers remained convinced of the benefits of the child-centered culture of Forest Hill”.⁹⁴

On the other hand, Low uses Seeley’s psychoanalytically inspired critique of mental hygiene as evidence for his own argument that the mental hygiene movement was ineffective because it was based on pseudo-scientific principles that translated into an excessive permissiveness in child rearing. So which was it? Psychoanalysis was at fault for promoting the indulgence of our children because of its flimsy evidential basis, or psychoanalysis provided an important qualification to the general orientation of progressive education that was conveniently ignored out of political opportunism on the part of the corporate elite? While Seeley, for his part, may have agreed with Low’s concern about parental disempowerment, I doubt that he would have entirely shared Low’s negative characterization of post-war culture. Seeley was enough of a flower child and rebel himself to have more likely identified with the Woodstock generation, and to have seen their activism as a sign of the success of his work, rather than the reverse. Moreover, Seeley would not have agreed that the problems of the

⁹² Anna Freud, *Psycho-Analysis for Teachers and Parents* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1935), 105.

⁹³ Low, “The Hand that Rocked the Cradle”, 51.

⁹⁴ Low, “The Hand that Rocked the Cradle”, 53.

mental hygiene movement could be traced back to the faulty science behind psychoanalysis. To the contrary, from Seeley's perspective it was more likely the failure of the powers-that-be to faithfully follow psychoanalytic doctrine that was at fault, if anything. Seeley would, however, have agreed with Low's criticism of the scientific basis for mental hygiene pedagogy to the extent that he has shown that it was infused with corporate interests. This was already evident in the early attachment of the mental hygienists to eugenics, but it is interesting to note the agility with which corporate strategy was able to adapt psychoanalysis to its ends once the fall of the Nazi regime rendered eugenics taboo.

ii) Hans Pols

Hans Pols is another historical writer of record who addresses some attention toward Seeley's particular role in the mental hygiene movement. Like Low, Pols argues that Seeley's sociological critique of mental health initiatives in schools in the 1950s helped to undo the alliance between the mental health experts and the school system, which had been built around the time of WWI:

The last project undertaken by the Toronto psychologists was an extensive interdisciplinary investigation of the mental health of a whole neighborhood, which was named, pseudonymously, *Crestwood Heights*.⁹⁵

It is significant as proof of Seeley's self wrought failure, and his successful subversion of the whole enterprise of the mental hygiene movement in Canada, that the Forest Hill Village Project was the last in a long line of psychological experiments conducted in schools by the Canadian Mental Health Association. Pols saw Seeley's critique as focussed on the ways in which his own project, the Forest Hill Village Project, only served to reinforce or legitimize the problematic social conditions in suburbia which were the root cause of mental health problems in the postwar era. Not only did the incorporation of mental health exercises in the schools serve to reveal these underlying social tensions, rather than contribute in any prophylactic way to alleviating their effects, they could do nothing to change the social conditions themselves. The social problems that Seeley identifies in middle class life in suburbia according to Pols are consistent with the general literature of the period epitomized in books like David Riesman's, *The Lonely Crowd*. Riesman's work, to which Seeley was a contributor as Low points out, focused on the social anxieties that accompanied the increased isolation, compartmentalization, mechanization, and performance pressures of modern suburban life:

⁹⁵ Hans Pols, "'Between the Laboratory and Life': Child Development Research in Toronto, 1919-1956", *History of Psychology* (Vol. 5, No. 2, 2002), 135-162.

Following David Riesman's influential critique of the middle classes in *The Lonely Crowd*, Seeley described the inhabitants of the neighborhood to be "for the most part, future-oriented, voluntaristic, individualistic, control-aspirant, rationalizing, organizing people, who bring such orientations, and any anxieties which may underlie them and flow from them, to *Crestwood Heights* when they come." Having cut the ties with their ethnic group in their embracement of an upper middle class status, the inhabitants of the neighborhood often displayed uncertainty, confusion, anxiety, and a wide variety of neurotic traits.⁹⁶

Of course, as Pols correctly notes, Seeley had established a collegial relationship with David Riesman when he was a student working towards his Ph.D. at U of C:

Sociologist John R. Seeley, who had received his Ph.D. from the Department of Sociology at Chicago, became increasingly interested in how specific cultural configurations led to tension and conflict in individuals and families. He found that most *Crestwood Heights* problems were related to social climbing and status anxiety.⁹⁷

However, contrary to Pols belief that Seeley had completed his Doctorate at U of C, this was in fact not the case. As we shall see, Pols was not the only one who had been deceived by a kind of slipperiness about his doctoral status on Seeley's part.

A second area of historical omission on Pols part in his assessment of Seeley's sociological analysis of the problems besetting mental health and educational initiatives was to consider the importance of psychoanalytical perspectives to Seeley. Granted these paradigms were at work in *Crestwood Heights* in a relatively hidden manner because of the need for Seeley to write in a way that was acceptable to his superiors. However, when a more in-depth understanding of the personal importance of psychoanalysis to Seeley is factored in, the influence of this perspective in the work comes to the surface in the mind of the reader. This omission may in part be the result of another historical error in regard to Seeley's biography on the part of Pol:

After the *Crestwood Heights* project was finished, Seeley underwent psychoanalysis to come to terms with his personal involvement in it.⁹⁸

He writes that Seeley went into psychoanalysis after the failure of the *Crestwood Heights* project as a way of dealing with it. In fact, Seeley had already completed the main part of his psychoanalytic experiment with Dr. Martin Fischer before he even began to work seriously on the writing of the book.

⁹⁶ Pols, "Between the Laboratory and Life", 150.

⁹⁷ Hans Pols, "'Anomie in the Metropolis': The City in American Sociology and Psychiatry Osiris", *Science and the City* (2nd Series, Vol. 18, 2003), 208.

⁹⁸ Pols, "Between the Laboratory and Life", 152.

iii) Kenneth Bagnell

There is another grouping of historical writing in relation to John R. Seeley and the Forest Hill Village Project which extol his “brilliance” and “innovations” as a pioneering social activist. The Forest Hill Village Project is cited in these other, even more exaggerated, heroic histories as a milestone in Canada’s social progress. The most influential amongst these sources is the popular history written by Kenneth Bagnell entitled *The Little Immigrants*, now in its second edition with a preface by Roy McLaren, a former Canadian Ambassador to Great Britain.⁹⁹ Seeley figures prominently in this episode in Canada’s national mythology as amongst the very last of the orphan children who came to Canada around the turn of the twentieth century. Despite the cruelty of their separation from their relatives and community in England at such a young age, not to mention their exploitation as cheap labour by Canadian farmers, Bagnell traces the story of how many of these children grew up to make significant contributions to Canadian culture. Seeley, Bagnell claims, “was to become, in the eyes of many, the most brilliant sociologist Canada ever produced”.¹⁰⁰ According to Bagnell, the high point of Seeley’s career was, “the famous study of suburban living based on Toronto’s Forest Hill Village, *Crestwood Heights*”.¹⁰¹ In later chapters of this study in which the story of Seeley’s childhood is reviewed, we shall examine the details of Seeley’s emigration to Canada as an orphan in 1929, which do not entirely corroborate Bagnell’s historical reconstructions. For one thing, we may say at this point that unlike the typical Barnardo child, Seeley was not born a poor, homeless waif.

iv) Edward Shorter

Perhaps the most important academic source, from amongst the more heroic histories, is the collection of essays edited by Edward Shorter entitled *TPH: History and Memories of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital, 1925 – 1966*. At the outset of this book, Shorter aligns himself with the positivist rebuttal of Foucauldian scholarship:

Twenty years ago it was really not on, not *bon ton*, to see psychiatry’s past as anything else than yet another chapter in the history of oppression. Since then, Foucault has come under withering fire, and the tyranny of this fantastical thesis of the “great confinement” has been broken.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Kenneth Bagnell, *The Little Immigrants: The Orphans Who Came to Canada* (Toronto: Macmillan, 2000), 247.

¹⁰⁰ Kenneth Bagnell, *The Little Immigrants*, 248.

¹⁰¹ Kenneth Bagnell: *The Little Immigrants*, 251.

¹⁰² Shorter ed., *TPH: History and Memories of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital*, 5.

According to Shorter, the critiques of Foucault have led to the “liberation” of the history of psychiatry from its association with social control mechanisms. The way has been cleared for psychiatry to explore its own history with good conscience, according to Shorter, and this in turn will enable the profession to further build on its contributions to social progress:

The new therapeutic self-confidence of psychiatry has deepened the curiosity of many psychiatrists themselves about the history of their field. It has given them a more positive appreciation of the intrinsic dignity of psychiatry, an understanding that psychiatry is a healing art with a mission to relieve suffering rather than a branch of the local police force. I would argue that reinforcing this awareness of the profession’s essential dignity requires some historical understanding of one’s roots.¹⁰³

With a view to this kind of vindication of the social role of psychiatry, Roger Baskett’s essay entitled “The Life of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital”, introduces the Forest Hill Village Project as a signpost of the new progressive orientation that was ushered in for Toronto psychiatry under the leadership of Aldwyn Stokes:

Stokes’ breadth of vision meant that many exciting types were about the Department of Psychiatry. New sources of funding allowed for this infusion of new blood and energy at TPH. The effect of this funding may be seen in a doubling of publications by staff members after 1951. Furthermore, the interests of the department became diversified. In 1949, the Forest Hill Project, a five-year study of the mental health of school children in a community, was begun. It was to apply the knowledge of psychiatrists and psychologists to improve the mental health of children. The study, the first major psychological research project undertaken in a Canadian community, focused on the emotional adjustment of school children by examining all aspects of their life in a community.¹⁰⁴

The star of Stokes’ new cast of social scientists integrated into the new, diversified Department of Psychiatry at U of T, was of course John R. Seeley. Unfortunately, the results of our study of Seeley’s role in the Forest Hill Village Project will not entirely serve to support Shorter’s agenda to buttress the social acceptability of the psychiatric profession. In many ways, the history of the Forest Hill Village Project when looked at in-depth in fact supports Foucault’s theories. From the evidence that the roots of the project lay in the military agenda for post-war Canada, to the revelations of the private hell of John R. Seeley in his role as Director of the Forest Hill Village Project, it is hard to bear in mind that, on the surface at least, there was supposed to be an ameliorative element to the Forest Hill Village Project. Ironically, it was mainly in the ways that Seeley took the project outside the psycho-biological methods of mainstream Toronto psychiatry that it achieved its most visionary

¹⁰³ Shorter ed., *TPH: History and Memories of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital*, 6.

¹⁰⁴ Shorter ed., *TPH: History and Memories of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital*, 136.

results. For example, the greatest achievement of the Project was the psychoanalytically oriented model of human relations classes held in the schools.

v) John Griffin

Now, if we turn to a look at the way that the Forest Hill Village Project is portrayed in John Griffin's, *Chronicle of the Canadian Mental Health Association*, we see more clearly the contrast between a dim and understated recognition of the latent potential for social damage from such psychiatric interventions, and the exaggerated claims for the potential role of the psychiatrist in social progress:

The study, in addition to being a sociological assesment of this urban suburb, indicated how the "new belief makers" the experts in mental health, education, child study etc., while not identified as value teachers, were about as morally effective as the parents. But the project left the individuals of the research team less confident that they had been at first about communicating and teaching mental health information and even less sure of their own personal psychological make-up and their own social position as defined by others. Another impression gained from the study was the difficulty of separating research and therapy in the psycho-social field. On the other hand, the small staff was surprised at how much could be done by so few. Someone has called the study a successful demonstration of community psychotherapy. Many indicated their awareness of a feeling of increased enthusiasm for the community, a sense of collective interest in and support for the project and even a vague sense of improved well-being.¹⁰⁵

Notice that even where Griffin, who was Seeley's boss at the CNCMH, hints at the problems that arose during the Forest Hill Village Project, he does so by shifting the blame to the patient who cannot be communicated with by the expert and who projects unfair characterizations onto the healing attempts of the psychiatric professional. But this doesn't stop Griffin from commending the Forest Hill Village Project as an effort of heroic proportions to combat the spread of mental illness.

Griffin is no less glowing in his assessment of John R. Seeley's role in the Forest Hill Village Project, referring to him as a "brilliant young sociologist", and a "remarkable innovator".¹⁰⁶ However, in the one published biographical interview he consented to about his career and accomplishments, he never made mention of Seeley.¹⁰⁷ There were others however, who remained loyal disciples of Seeley to the end.

¹⁰⁵ John D. Griffin, *In Search of Sanity: A Chronicle of the Canadian Mental Health Association, 1918 – 1988* (London: Third Eye, 1989), 142.

¹⁰⁶ Griffin, *In Search of Sanity*, 128.

¹⁰⁷ Djuwe, Joe Blum and Sam Sussman, *Pioneers of Mental Health and Social Change 1930-1989* (London: Third Eye Publications, 1989), 44.

vi) Michael Rossman

There have been a number of more informal biographical sketches written by Seeley's friends that read more like apologies than histories. It is perhaps not surprising that the eulogies for Seeley came long before his actual death, given his own sense of being forced into an exile from Canada in the 1960s when he was still only in his forties. One set of profiles was offered by his friends in a 1976 edition of *Sociological Inquiry* along with a series of essays in his honour. Typical of the kinds of apology offered for Seeley in these essays is the following excerpt from Rossman's appropriately-entitled essay, "The Fool of Sociology":

I came to see him instead as the Fool of Sociology, as over a decade I watched him return battered from engagements and each time sally forth again, with not his optimism but his innocence and wonder undaunted. In perpetual naivete, he sought to extend justice and reason in a world in which, though he grasped the facts of malice and insanity and despite his experience of them, he could never quite comprehend their nature and force. The cowardice and betrayal of his colleagues continued to surprise him; time and again he foretold the routine bureaucratic disaster, yet was always amazed when it came. Totally involved in cultivating an integral sensibility, he could not grasp how others not so committed could escape the obviousness of its conclusions, nor what a genuine rarity was his way of being in the moral world.¹⁰⁸

As we shall see in the next chapter concerning Seeley's confessions, there was much more to Seeley's life than such a simple reductionism allows. He may have been a martyr and a fool, but he was neither naïve nor innocent.

¹⁰⁸ Michael Rossman, "The Fool of Sociology", *Sociological Inquiry, Journal of the National Sociology Honor Society* (46, 3-4, 1976), 161-162.

Part II

The Confessions of John R. Seeley

For pure she was with a purity lewd and burning
A purity fetched of the cesspool and got of the slime
Fetid, corrupt and corrupting, purist of poison
Quintessent crime

John R. Seeley

1. Floating Anxiety

i) Beatrice Fischer

Beatrice Fischer, who became a close personal friend of Seeley's as a result of his friendship with her late husband, told me in an interview that, "Jack loved the word analysand". She was sitting with me by an upstairs window of her mansion in Forest Hill looking out over expansive gardens that recede into a deep ravine. We were reading together Seeley's eulogy to her husband, Martin Fischer. She read out loud the following passage from the eulogy to illustrate her point:

Psychoanalysis is a long and costly process. It is not out of the way now for two thousand or more hours of talk to pass between analyst and analysand (nearly all the analysand's talk). And the process is surrounded, first on the analyst's side and then on both, by an unremitting devotion to the discovery of truth, and again on the side of the analyst, by an invariant showing of faith in (and love for) the analysand.¹⁰⁹

We both shared a laugh over the verbosity of Seeley's idealized account of psychoanalysis. I said it was "windy", but she went even farther and exclaimed, "windy city"! She said that Seeley loved the sound of his own rhetoric. All joking aside, however, the resonance of the word analysand for Seeley may have been related to its association for him with the memory of his lifelong colleague and friend. It was in his imagined capacity as Fischer's analysand that Seeley felt he had been "returned from the grave".¹¹⁰

It is singular, however, that this blending of the roles of colleague, friend and analysand materialized in the relationship between Martin Fischer and John R. Seeley. The unorthodox nature of their

¹⁰⁹ John R. Seeley, "Eulogy at the Funeral of Dr. Martin Aaron Fischer", January 13th, 1992, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹¹⁰ John R. Seeley, "Eulogy at the Funeral of Dr. Martin Aaron Fischer", January 13th, 1992, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

relationship was exposed in their frequent boundary crossing between personal and professional realms. These two pioneers in the field of mental health policy in Canada certainly worked together in a variety of ways. They met as colleagues with the Department of Psychiatry at U of T. They were both particularly interested in applications of psychoanalysis, which was all the rage in intellectual circles in North America in the early post-war era. Fischer collected Seeley's drafts of early sociological articles and Seeley went with Fischer to visit hospitals and group homes for kids like Browndale. The question remains, however, whether a description of their relationship could realistically also be made to encompass the roles of psychoanalyst and analysand. After all, Fischer had no formal training or certification as a psychoanalyst, and Seeley was never in one place long enough to even attempt to endure the daily grind of a psychoanalytic course of treatment. Indeed, psychoanalysis had not yet officially come to Toronto when they first met.

Yes, amongst the letters, poems, essays and newspaper clippings that fill Fischer's "Seeley" file there are notes taken over the course of a few months in 1952 recording the latter's "free associations". Yet these notes do not record Fischer as having offered any diagnosis, interpretations, or doctor's recommendations of any sort. By the present standards of medical record keeping in the field of psychotherapy in Ontario (which have only very recently been codified in legislation such as the *Psychotherapy Act, 2007*) Fischer's notes would not pass muster. But then, we would not want to fall into the trap of applying present standards to past practices. Indeed, it is likely because of the history of blurry boundaries in the field of psychotherapy that rules began to take shape in regards to ethics and record-keeping at the turn of the 21st century. The pioneering work of Fischer and Seeley may have helped to carve out the particular shape that the profession has since assumed, but it was not the same as what we now experience. It would not be fair to say that they were engaged in a process of medical psychotherapy or psychoanalysis, but rather, as men for whom their work was also their hobby, it would seem more fitting to suggest that they were conducting a private experiment with such ideas and techniques. Out of respect for the medical professionalism of Dr. Martin Fischer, and with an eye to the prevarications of Mr. John R. Seeley, it will be argued in this chapter that their collaboration should be viewed as having the more informal status of a confession.

Fischer and Seeley themselves ultimately saw their relationship as a friendship. Erica Fischer, Martin's eldest daughter, speculated in an interview with me that John R. Seeley was her father's "only real friend".¹¹¹ Otherwise, his time was consumed with his work and to a subordinate extent with his family, which included his wife Beatrice and their five children. When questioned by me as

¹¹¹ Interview with Erica Fischer, 9 November 2009

to why her husband Martin would agree to meet with Seeley at airports, coffee shops, and for walks in the park, Beatrice responded simply that Martin enjoyed the intellectual dialogue with Seeley. Attraction like this to Seeley as an intellectual sounding-board was not uncommon. Many men who have become prominent in intellectual fields in the life of this city were also mesmerized by Seeley's intellect. One could count amongst them Murray Ross the first President of York University, Clayton Ruby a living giant of constitutional litigation, and Rick Salutin, the already mentioned writer for the *Globe and Mail*. Members of the Fischer family remember fondly the eulogy John R. Seeley read to the gathered mourners, "Martin is my dearest friend" Seeley said, " – and both my son and my father".¹¹² In this chapter, we will explore more fully the nature of the relationship between Seeley and Fischer, and its implications for an understanding of the larger social history of the Forest Hill Village Project.

When Seeley arrived at Forest Hill Collegiate in 1948 with grandiose ambitions to change the way that education had been organized in Canada since the 19th century, he was only 35 years old and he had no experience as a teacher. In fact, it was only with the beginning of the Forest Hill Village Project that Seeley actually assumed his first official role in schools. Prior to the Forest Hill Village Project he had been a child, a student, a farmer, an office worker and a cub-scout leader; but he had never been a teacher, nor had he worked in a public school or a university in a teaching capacity that carried with it any meaningful responsibilities. Yet, he was asked to train teachers in regard to one of their most important roles, student discipline and character development. Now, all teachers must go through the intense anxiety and heavy workload of the first few years in front of a classroom, even after their training. From this perspective, perhaps we can imagine how Seeley felt not having had any such formal training to prepare him for his new responsibilities. Perhaps Seeley recognized at some level that his claim to have the expertise to train teachers with up to twenty or thirty years of experience in the classroom bordered on imposture. He must have put on quite a good act for the first few years. Eventually, however, the reality caught up to him when the anxiety Seeley felt reached such levels that he sought help from his colleague and friend Martin Fischer. The irony is dramatic. In the course of leading a project to improve the mental health of children in school, Seeley himself began to experience mental health problems.

¹¹² John R. Seeley, "Eulogy at the Funeral of Dr. Martin Aaron Fischer", January 13th, 1992, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

ii) Mother's Intuition

In his interviews with me, Seeley said his reason for entering psychoanalysis as the Forest Hill Village Project came to a climax in 1953 was, "floating anxiety, like most people". This was understatement, it would seem, when we consider that in the Fischer Papers the issues addressed are revealed as being far more complex than simply a state of anxiety. Fischer's notes indicate that Seeley referred to the severity of his anxiety as "acute", rather than merely "floating". Indeed, Seeley makes frequent reference at this time period to experiencing levels of anxiety and panic that were "near terror".¹¹³ For example, in the following excerpt from a letter Seeley wrote to Fischer dated January 14th, 1954 he describes the intensity of his anxiety at the time:

It is only at a number of quite identifiable points that I experience marked anxiety to near terror. I am very uncomfortable with Stout, or any of the board members or authority figures here. When we had a picture taken together for publicity purposes I felt, "as though about to faint", couldn't smile, could hardly pay any attention to the conversation – indeed, hear as though through the usual auditory fog or blanket....I also feel very anxious when I think about the Forest Hill Village project or handle any of its materials. I wrote about two pages last night and that was about all I "could" do.¹¹⁴

However, the public face any person puts on their inner experience is always braver than that which is revealed in their more intimate relationships. In a letter to his elder brother Frank dated the 5th of January 1953 Seeley plays down the severity of the suffering that motivated him to enter what he called psychoanalysis in rebuttal of his mother's suspicion of a "nervous breakdown":

As to Mama's shrewd suspicion as to what is going on, I think she had best be told with some clear distinctions drawn. This is no "breakdown", nervous or otherwise. I have had to stop and reorganize my life and that is what I am now doing...Would you tell her that I have been forced to recognize an anxiety state, that I have had to seek help in coping with it, and that I have that help, that we are making rapid progress, that the main task is to understand my childhood and especially my relation to her.¹¹⁵

Given the tone of this passage, the reader needs no reminder here, that Seeley's relationship with his mother was problematic. As we shall see, he accused her of the most horrible failures as a parent. However, though "nervous breakdown" is not medical terminology, perhaps Seeley's mother's intuition was not that far off. Despite her son's denial, the general connotation of a nervous breakdown as suddenly intensified levels of depression and or anxiety, matches very well with Seeley's situation. Whether it was in fact a nervous breakdown that prompted Seeley to make his

¹¹³ Seeley to Fischer, January 14th, 1954, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹¹⁴ Seeley to Fischer, January 14th, 1954, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹¹⁵ Seeley to his brother Frank Friedeberg-Seeley, January 5th, 1953, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

confessions to Dr. Fischer, however, is not as important for our purposes as an understanding of the deeper issues rooted in Seeley's life history that were unleashed when he assumed his role as Director of the Forest Hill Village Project. The first of these issues both sequentially and in terms of gravity (as already alluded to in Seeley's letter to his brother Frank quoted above) was Seeley's troubled relationship with his mother, which will take us back to point zero in the trajectory of his development.

2. Confessor

i) Martin Fischer

Before we can dive into the deep end of the story Seeley tells Fischer about his life, we should first search for some preliminary understanding of the often-hidden voice of Fischer who plays the role of confessor in their relationship. Who was Dr. Martin A. Fischer? How was it that Seeley found Dr. Fischer in the early 1950s when, as Seeley said in interviews with me, there were "only two or three psychoanalysts in Toronto", and no officially recognized psychoanalytic society? Most importantly, why did Dr. Fischer allow his relationship with Seeley to transgress the conventional boundaries of the doctor-patient relationship, or could it even be considered such a strictly professional relationship? The answers to these questions may give us insight into the nature of the influence Fischer exerted on Seeley.

Martin Moses Aaron Fischer was born on the 22nd of May 1913 in a small town, then in eastern Poland, now in the Ukraine, that was known as Kamionka-Strumilowa, which historically had a large Jewish population.¹¹⁶ His parents Mr. Effraim Fischer and his wife Sara left Poland for Vienna in 1920 at the end of the Great War. His parents were not wealthy. According to Fischer's school records at the University of Vienna, his father was a "plumbers assistant".¹¹⁷ Fischer himself, however, told his wife Beatrice that he was no ordinary plumber; rather, he was an "artist in the design of plumbing parts". Beatrice Fischer remembers her husband's mother in similarly glorified terms as a woman who could do no wrong. Sara Fischer was completely devoted to her three sons, Martin being the oldest. Fischer himself referred to his mother as, "Meiner selige Mutter", my sainted mother. He was crushed by the way the tragic events of the Holocaust affected her in

¹¹⁶ *Curriculum Vitae*, Refugee Camp I, St. Paul, Ile-aux-Noix, Quebec, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹¹⁷ Memorial Book for the Victims of National Socialism at the University of Vienna in 1938, http://gedenkbuch.univie.ac.at/index.php?id435&no_cache1&L2

particular, but it tore apart his whole family and wrought in him a determination to redeem their suffering.

Up until the time of the Anschluss, Fischer had progressed successfully through school to the fifth year of his studies at the Medical School of the University of Vienna. There are signs of an early interest on Fischer's part in psychoanalysis which may not be surprising from a young Jewish student attending the same school Freud himself had attended. Fischer was an observant Jew, who in his youth was active in the "Students' Aid Committee of the Kultusgemeinde in Vienna as a representative of the Judea Students' Organization".¹¹⁸ In this capacity, Fischer had sought to sell Dr. Freud tickets to a B'nai Brith dance but his busy schedule had forced him to decline the offer. Though he had artistic talents, having spent much time, for example, sketching the works of Michelangelo on his frequent visits to Italy, Freud acknowledged his more limited aptitude for music. He may therefore have shied away from the dance, but in any case Freud was gracious enough to send his regrets in writing to the Fischer boy along with a cheque for the purchase of two tickets *in absentia*. Somehow, Fischer managed to retain this letter throughout his family's travails during the Holocaust and to this day it holds a special place in the Fischer library.¹¹⁹

A second clue suggesting that the origins of Fischer's interest in psychoanalysis could be traced back to his roots in Vienna is the fact that he had studied psychiatry and neurology for two terms as part of his medical program at the University of Vienna between the years 1933 and 1938. Fischer notes the details of this practicum on an information sheet he sent to the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene to be used for a "Biographical Directory of Canadian Psychiatrists". Though the form is not dated, it must have been submitted sometime after Fischer's certification as a psychiatrist in 1947 by U of T, but before the transition from the old name of the Canadian National Committee on Mental Health (CNCMH) to the new name of Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) in 1950. This Biographical Directory of Canadian Psychiatrists was completed by 1952 when it proved to be a "significant factor in helping to organize the Canadian Psychiatric Association".¹²⁰ In the

¹¹⁸ *Curriculum Vitae*, Refugee Camp I, St. Paul, Ile-aux-Noix, Quebec. Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹¹⁹ Dr. Douglas Frayn, former Director of the Toronto Institute of Psychoanalysis, offered a quite different interpretation of Freud's interest in the tickets to the dance: "My guess is that the dance tickets were for Lou Andreas Salome and Anna Freud. Lou often visited the Freud's and was the only follower allowed to attend Freud's Wednesday night group, as well as Adler's Monday group. She loved to dance and party and particularly to bring August Aichorn to Freud's for dinner despite Freud's admonition to her request – 'Why do you always ask for the Goy to come?' Anna Freud had a thing going for August Aichorn".

¹²⁰ Griffin, *In Search of Sanity*, 144.

space on the form set for information regarding “Professional experience”, Fischer writes: “Internship at the Psychiatric Clinic of the Viennese General Hospital - 1937”.¹²¹

Though Freud himself was elderly and ill with cancer by 1937, and likely did not appear at the Hospital or Faculty at the time that Fischer was studying there, certainly the shadows of psychoanalysis were cast over the work of psychiatrists in Vienna even if there were sceptics amongst them. For example, the Chair of the Department of Psychiatry at the time Fischer attended the medical school was Dr. Otto Pötzl who had succeeded Freud’s erstwhile colleague and competitor Wagner-Jauregg in 1928, and remained in the position until 1945. Pötzl conducted experimental research designed to prove the empirical validity of Freud’s theory of the unconscious. In June 1917 he delivered a paper on the theme of experimentally provoked dream images as an illustration of Freudian dream analysis. Six months later he was admitted as a member of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society and retained this membership until 1933. In a letter to Freud, Pötzl wrote: “I cannot imagine my teaching work without psychoanalysis. My audience and I are your fervent supporters”.¹²² Surely, Fischer too was infected with this enthusiasm for Freud’s intrepid intellectual adventures as a young student of psychiatry in Vienna. If nothing else, the straight path he follows toward a psychiatric career as a refugee in Canada and the importance he attaches to Freudian approaches over the course of his career would suggest that this had been the case. One could, however, interpret his career as a pioneering Canadian psychiatrist as a nostalgic longing to retain some symbolic ties to his homeland. Of course, it might have been a bit of both. Beatrice Fischer joked that her husband was a born psychoanalyst who emerged from the womb with a beard and a note-pad ready for the first patient!¹²³

Like his parents before him, who had left Poland in the aftermath of World War I, Dr. Fischer was forced to leave Vienna and pursue his studies in psychiatry in Canada as a consequence of the events of World War II. The Nazi intervention in Austria in March of 1938 had forced him out of medical school just prior to writing his final examinations. He wrote on the *Curriculum Vitae* he typed up for Canadian Authorities in 1940 that, “I was preparing myself for the examinations of the last two Rigorosa, when I was forced by the Nazi Authorities to interrupt my study”.¹²⁴ The trauma of his final day in Medical School in Vienna not only lends insight into Fischer’s determination to ameliorate the conditions in schools in Canada, but also serves as a dramatic reminder of the role of

¹²¹ Martin Fischer, “Information Required for Biographical Directory of Canadian Psychiatrists”, submitted to the Canadian National Mental Health Association, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹²² Ernest Jones: *Sigmund Freud: Life and Work* (London, Hogarth Press, 1953-1957), 255.

¹²³ Interviews with Beatrice Fischer

¹²⁴ *Curriculum Vitae*, Refugee Camp I, St. Paul, Ile-aux-Noix, Quebec, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

eugenicist medicine in the Holocaust. According to Beatrice Fischer, Martin Fischer's recollections of that day were that while in class National Socialist Storm Troopers marched into the school and into his classroom. Fischer and other students at the time referred to these Nazis as "verbrechers", criminals. They forced all of the students to get down on floor and called for the appearance of a certain professor who handed them a list of the Jewish students who were to be expelled from the school. From his perspective on the floor, Martin Fischer recognized the boots of the man that entered the class and handed the list to the "verbrechers" as those of his favourite professor.

Beatrice Fischer cannot remember the name of that professor, but it may very well have been the infamous Nazi Doctor Hans Eppinger who became notorious for his cruel medical experiments on the condemned at the Dachau concentration camp. According to Fischer's *Curriculum Vitae*, "From 4.1.1937 till 12.3.1938 I practiced as cand. med. at the Allgemeines Krankenhaus Vienna, at the first Medical University Clinic [under the supervision of] Professor Dr. Hans Eppinger, Vienna IX. Lazarettegrasse 14".¹²⁵ In his last term at the University of Vienna prior to his expulsion he had been registered in Dr. Eppinger's class in "Internal Medicine".¹²⁶

Whether or not it was Eppinger who handed over the list, it was read out and a struggle ensued between the Jewish students named and the "verbrecher's" seeking to remove them from the school premises. Many of the students actually died in that struggle from being thrown down the stairs. Fischer himself was knocked unconscious by the fall, and was left by the "verbrecher's" who did not take the time to distinguish between the dead and the living. When he came to, he managed to get to a streetcar that took him to his parent's apartment. The storm troopers had already been there, following through on their list, and Martin Fischer fled to a nearby wood known locally as the "Wiener-Wald". The Vienna Woods was a large wooded area of the lower Austrian Alps that reaches into Vienna. Martin Fischer hid out there for the rest of the summer in a hut known to him and his friends, until the cold forced him back to his parent's apartment.

It is hard to imagine that Martin Fischer could have ever liked Dr. Eppinger whose involvement with eugenicist medical practice included experiments at Dachau with Gypsies to determine how long people can live on seawater. The Gypsies who died from dehydration during this experiment were witnessed licking the floor after it had been mopped in the last days before their death. Eppinger committed suicide rather than face sentencing during the Nuremburg Tribunal on War Crimes in 1946. If it was Eppinger, perhaps Martin Fischer had naively admired his medical skills which were

¹²⁵ *Curriculum Vitae*, Refugee Camp I, St. Paul, Ile-aux-Noix, Quebec, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹²⁶ Memorial Book for the Victims of National Socialism at the University of Vienna

so well known that he was called to treat Stalin in 1936! But if it was not Eppinger, this would be no surprise given that the Medical faculty in general went along with the Nazi intervention in 1938 without resistance.

Immediately upon the Anschluss having taken effect on March 15th, committed Nazi activist Eduard Pernkopf was made Dean of the Vienna Medical School. Pernkopf had joined the Nazi Party Storm Troops in Austria as far back as 1933. He presided over the immediate expulsion of all Jewish Professors and students from the medical school in the months just after the Anschluss. According to the University of Vienna Medical School Memorial Book, Martin Fischer is listed in the category of expelled students:

Martin Fischer was enrolled finally in the spring term at this medical school in the fourth year of his studies. He could continue his studies in the context of the numerus clausus of Jewish students until the end of the spring term 1938.¹²⁷

What is perhaps most thought-provoking about Pernkopf's purge was the extent to which such measures were concentrated in the medical faculty rather than other faculties at the University of Vienna:

Of 770 professors and 221 "Dozenten" (assistant professors), 322 (45%) were forced to leave, most of them within weeks after the German takeover. The percentage of those in the Faculty who had to leave was significantly larger (78%) than in any other faculty of Vienna or indeed of any university in Europe. For most of the 118 persons evicted, the sole reasons for dismissal were Jewish origin or marriage to a Jewish partner.¹²⁸

It would seem that the priority the Nazi Party placed on controlling the Vienna Medical School reflected the emphasis in their program on eugenicist medicine, and in particular, on the culling of the Jewish population in Europe. The implementation of such programs would require both the elimination of Jewish physicians and the indoctrination of the remaining, so called Aryan, staff.

When he returned to his parents' apartment from the WeinerWald, Fischer continued the process of arranging emigration for himself and his family to the United States. He must have begun this process soon after expulsion from the Medical School in July, or earlier, because on September 7th, 1938 he went along with his father to the US Consulate in Vienna to register for a travel visa. He and

¹²⁷ Memorial Book for the Victims of National Socialism at the University of Vienna

¹²⁸ [Edzard Ernst](http://www.annals.org/content/122/10/789.full), "'A Leading Medical School Seriously Damaged': Vienna 1938", *History of Medicine, Annals of Internal Medicine*, (American College of Physicians, 2004 <http://www.annals.org/content/122/10/789.full>).

his parents had already received affidavits for emigration to the US during August because they had relatives in New York. This must have seemed so promising to them at the time, but little did they know what terrible obstacles to their escape the winds of war would blow across their path. Moreover, the enemies of their continued family life together would prove not to be the Nazis alone, but also the actions of governments in England, Canada and the US; all of whom succumbed to the confusion, fear, and resultant bureaucratic rigidity that accompanies a breakdown of the political order.

At the US Consulate that day, Martin and Ephraim Fischer registered as part of the “Polish Quota” because they were not native Austrians, which meant they had to wait their turn within this restricted group to receive their visas. Sadly, they learned that this process could take two years or more, but that was not the worst of it. According to Erica Fischer, Martin’s recollection was that Nazi Storm Troopers opened fire on the crowd that day and again he witnessed the death of innocent members of the “Kultusgemeinde”. Though Martin and his father managed to get back to their apartment, they arrived only to be subjected to a bizarre scene of the “verbrecher’s” arriving at the apartment later that same day to arrest them both on the charge of illegal possession of a gun that the “verbrecher’s” themselves had planted in the apartment. Martin Fischer’s recollections reported to his daughter Erica was that a lady in an apartment on one of the lower floors had served as an informant about their presence in the building. Though these memories may contain some distortions that are inevitable in the recounting of oral history, such as the conflation of events that may have occurred on separate occasions, they are invaluable at least in the sense that they give us a feeling for the desperation that Jewish people in Vienna at this time experienced. Like caged animals, they flung themselves against wall after wall in the attempt to break out.

According to the family oral tradition, Martin Fischer and his father were detained in the “Kripo – Leitstelle # 9 building on Rossauer Lande 5-7 in Vienna”, the Criminal Police Control Station. By this time the local Austrian Kripo, or Criminal Police, had been integrated with the Gestapo under the ultimate command of senior Nazis in Berlin and were assigned the responsibility for implementation of the reactionary new racial regime. Erica Fischer remembers her father’s reluctant recounting of having been dragged from the large gym-like area where they were held at the Kripo–Leitstelle to an office where he was bludgeoned with the butt of a gun on the head for the impertinence of standing on the carpet. Martin Fischer fell to the ground bloodied. In a ruse to psychologically torment the already demoralized prisoner, the verbrecher in charge, demanded of him: “Are you a socialist?”

Martin Fischer defiantly said, “Yes, I am a socialist”.¹²⁹ The Kripo then dug through his wallet and found what they thought of as confirming evidence that Martin Fischer had worked for the “Judentisch” to gather and distribute food for medical students in need at the University of Vienna. Martin Fischer’s punishment for the crimes of being a socialist and a Jew was to be sent to work building roads somewhere near Salzburg *en route* to a concentration camp. His luck was with him however, when he was somehow selected as part of a group of one hundred unmarried young Jewish men destined for concentration camps that were sold to the Central British Fund for Jewish Refugee’s in Britain.

ii) Camp I

The historical record of Martin Fischer’s migration through British refugee camps takes up the story from this point with documents in relation to his requests to British authorities to allow the process of his emigration to the United States to go forward. At this time he was being interned at the Kitchener Camp, which according to Eric Koch’s account in *Deemed Suspect* was:

.....a “City of Refuge” maintained by the “Council for German Jewry”. Launched at the end of 1938 after the horror of Kristallnacht, it accommodated the men who had been thrown in concentration camps such as Sachsenhausen during the Pogrom only to be released if they could prove that they had an English Visa, as well as those who were in acute danger of being arrested unless they left Germany or Austria immediately. The camp designed to house transients who waited for visas to the United States or other countries, was a self-governing enterprise, and hundreds received agricultural and technical training there”.¹³⁰

According one document entitled, “Application for Release”, Martin Fischer arrived in England on May 1, 1939 in Dover and proceeded from there to the Kitchener Refugee Transit Camp, Richborough, near Sandwich, Kent.¹³¹

I was admitted to come to England on ground of the possibility to emigrate to the USA after my turn to go there would become due. My landing permit included the following remark:

“S14 Leave is hereby granted at Dover on the condition that the holder proceeds forthwith to Richboro Refugee Camp, registers at once with the police and remains at the Camp until he emigrates”.¹³²

¹²⁹ Interview with Erica Fischer, 11 November 2009

¹³⁰ Eric Koch, *Deemed Suspect: A Wartime Blunder* (Toronto: Methuene, 1980), 7.

¹³¹ Martin Fischer, “Application for Release: According to the Home Office Statement of July 23rd 1940 concerning the question of releasing of German and Austrian Civilian Internees”, Category C. Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario.

¹³² “Application for Release”, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

Though in the meantime Martin Fischer had volunteered and served admirably in the British Military, Tribunals for the review of the status of Germans and Austrians in Britain were set up immediately after war was declared on September 3rd, 1939. In Martin Fischer's case he had worked for British intelligence in translating German naval messages to great effect, according to Beatrice Fischer's recollections, even preventing an attack on a British ship. According to his, "Application for Release", Martin Fischer served as a Camp Leader in the Kitchener Camp, and as a "Civilian Leader and responsible for 180 men who were working at the Radio Security Section", where these men were conducting work of "national importance".¹³³

Nevertheless, the public was not in a trusting mood toward enemy aliens. When the war broke out Martin Fischer was interrogated for the purpose of assessing whether or not he might pose a risk to British National Security. The tribunal determined in October 1939 that Martin Fischer was not a threat. He was labelled a Category C "Refugee from Nazi Oppression", in contrast to those identified in Categories A and B who were "deemed suspect".¹³⁴ Those classified like Fischer in Category C were originally free to travel. Despite this, as the war intensified with the German invasion of France in 1940, the British government became increasingly concerned that enemy aliens might be planted as fifth columnists amongst the refugee population. Thus, "plans were made to intern all male enemy aliens in Category C between the ages of sixteen and seventy, even the ones who had been completely cleared by the Tribunals".¹³⁵ By the summer of 1940 Martin Fischer's internment as a potential Fifth Columnist, even though he was in fact a determined enemy of the Nazi Regime, led to his deportation along with other enemy aliens to Canada. This was in order to relieve the burden on British Troops of supervising them at a time when there was a real fear of a German invasion across the English Channel. Rather than travelling to the United States as an émigré, Martin Fischer found himself amongst other Category B and C internees on board the Polish Liner, 'Sobieski' en route to "Camp I", on the Isle aux Noix in the St Lawrence River, near Montreal, Canada.

At 'Camp I', on the "Isle of Nuts", as he translated it in a letter to his brothers in Israel, Martin Fischer immediately assumed a leadership role:

He had been singled out as the camp leader, not only because he spoke English, but because, as apparently the authorities quickly discovered, he had already performed special duties in the Kitchener Camp in England.¹³⁶

¹³³ "Application for Release", Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹³⁴ Eric Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 9.

¹³⁵ Eric Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 14.

¹³⁶ Eric Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 98.

In a sense, it was really in his role as leader at Camp I in the early 1940s during the dark days of World War II that Martin Fischer confirmed for himself his calling as a counsellor. The treatment of the prisoners in the Camp was relatively humane in terms of the availability of food, recreational opportunities and books, but it was the psychological distress caused by indefinite internment while a Holocaust was being inflicted on their relatives and friends still in Europe that at times verged on being intolerable. For Martin Fischer, the primary stressor was his inability to contact and help his parents who remained stranded in Vienna under the “Nazi terror” as he described it in his letters. Indeed, the central focus of the stream of letters and documents that Martin Fischer sent to relatives, friends and government officials from Camp I was the effort to get his parents out of Austria. For example, his anxiety about his parents is revealed in the following letter sent just months after his arrival at Camp I on December 15th, 1940, in which he pleads for help in getting a new affidavit for his parents to emigrate to the United States:

You will undoubtedly realize the terrible situation my parents are in. Their hope for rescue which kept their spirit to endure the ruthless persecution by the Nazis is now gone. Robbed of their property, deprived of their home, separated from their three sons, suffering from starvation and cold they have now to continue to stand the brutal and barbarous Nazi terror. Unfortunately, being interned myself, I cannot do anything to mitigate their fate.¹³⁷

Even toward the end of his internment at Camp I Fischer was still struggling with his powerlessness and anxiety about his parents. This was reflected in the following excerpt from a letter to his brothers, who had managed to escape Vienna for Israel:

First I should like to inform you that according to letters of September 3rd and September 9th, which I received the other day, our dearest parents are alright. Father is still working with the Kultusgemeinde. Unfortunately, since there is no American Consulate there anymore, it is impossible for them to get a visa right now, though I succeeded in getting a new affidavit for them. Even the Schneider family who have already got ship tickets are still there and as mother reports, there is no telling when they will have a chance to leave, since they have to get a new visa. Still the danger of an imminent deportation is always present for our dearest ones and all others there...I am really trying my very best to help them, but being interned myself, I am not able to do more at present.¹³⁸

It was still possible to receive letters from Vienna in the early years of the war, though this changed as the war against the Nazi regime drew to its close. Going without news from his parents even after his release from Camp I during the later years of the war, Martin Fischer did not learn that they had miraculously survived the Holocaust in Vienna until well after the war had ended. Of the over 200,000 Jews who had inhabited Vienna prior to the Anschluss, less than 5,000 remained in the city at the

¹³⁷ Martin Fischer, Letter from Camp I, Dec. 15th, 1940, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹³⁸ Fischer to Brothers, Samuel and David, October 31, 1941, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

end of the war. Most had either emigrated like Martin Fischer and his brothers or been subject to the deportations, referred to by Martin Fischer in the above letter, to the unmentionable death camps in the east. The fate of Vienna's Jews, and the miracle of the Fischer's survival, is revealed in the following excerpt from the Washington Holocaust Museum's description of the deportations from Vienna:

During the war, German policy regarding the Jewish population shifted from one of expropriation and Jewish emigration to forced deportation. Systematic mass deportations of the Viennese Jewish population began in the autumn of 1939 when, on Eichmann's orders, SS and police officials deported some 1,500 Jews from Vienna to a detention camp in Nisko, Poland. In late winter 1941, the Germans deported approximately 4,500 additional Viennese Jews to occupied Poland (primarily to Izbica and other ghettos in the Lublin region), where most were later murdered. In the autumn of 1941 and the spring of 1942, the Germans deported thousands more Jews from Vienna to cities in the occupied Soviet Union (Riga, Kovno, Vilna, and Minsk). Locally stationed SS and police officials then murdered these Jews, mostly in mass shootings. Thousands of Viennese Jews were also deported to the Lodz and Theresienstadt ghettos.

By October 1942 only about 8,000 Jews remained on Austrian soil. German officials deported approximately 1,900 of these Jews in 1943 and 1944. Some Jews remained in hiding. Many of the others still in Vienna were persons married to non-Jews. All in all, SS and police deported some 47,555 Austrian Jews to the east. The vast majority of these Jews, along with approximately 18,000 refugees to Austria, were murdered during the Holocaust.¹³⁹

Martin Fischer's parents had been amongst the few Jewish survivors of the war in Vienna, at a time when the city itself had become a death camp for Jews. Perhaps they had been able to make themselves indispensable to Nazi authorities as leaders of the Kultusgemeinde, as is hinted at in Martin Fischer's letter to his brother. According to Beatrice Fischer's recollections, Sara Fischer had been chosen by the Kultusgemeinde to control the supply of food in the Jewish Ghetto in Vienna and this role may have saved her life.¹⁴⁰ After the war, through Martin's organizational efforts his parents were able to travel to Israel for a happy reunion with their younger sons. In the context of such a long struggle for survival and reunification, it is tragic that Martin Fischer's "selige Mutter" died from complications after surgery in Israel in 1948. He had traveled all the way there to see her through what should have been a relatively minor operation.

Meanwhile, as Leader of Camp I, Martin Fischer had not only to deal with his own anxiety about his family's future, he also had to concern himself with the struggles of the other men in the camp for

¹³⁹ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "The Holocaust", *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/index.php?ModuleId=10005143>, accessed September 8, 2006

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Beatrice Fischer, 24 November 2008.

whom he was responsible. From the beginning, the situation was difficult for everybody as Eric Koch identifies in his later interviews with Martin Fischer about the experience. When the prisoners, as they were at first understood by their Canadian guards, finally arrived after their long journey across the Atlantic aboard the *Sobieski*, they had another long wet journey ahead of them to what had previously been called Fort Lennox. This old British Fort dated back to the War of 1812, but had been quickly converted into an island prison replete with barbed wire, watchtowers, and sentries. When they arrived with their belongings soaked and torn at the sight of another prison camp, which may have conjured memories of the German concentration camps many had already endured prior to their release to Britain, they were terrified once more:

The desperation was global, Martin Fischer told me....On that first night, he told me, people were crying; they were breaking down¹⁴¹

Indeed, in addition to their powerlessness in relation to what was going on overseas, these men were concerned that Canadian authorities were misunderstanding their own situation. In the following letter to Canadian authorities of August 3rd, 1940, within weeks of their arrival Martin Fischer communicated the concerns of his fellow inmates about their status:

We understand from a big sign put on the wall of our House today that we are considered and described as "Prisoners of War" (Kriegsgefangene), a statement against which we must protest. We do not know whether there are two sorts of Internment Camps and different regulations for Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees. In any case, we must maintain that we are Refugees from Nazi Oppression and certainly not prisoners of war in any sense of the word – a fact which is known to the officers in charge of Internment Camp I but possibly not to all authorities concerned.

A simple investigation would prove that there is not the slightest reason to consider us, and consequently treat us, as Prisoners of War or possible fifth columnists. Should such an investigation be omitted, we are very afraid we would not only be treated as Prisoners of War as long as the war may last, but would also have to face all legal and political consequences resulting from such a status. We might even be put at the disposal of the German government just the same as a regular German soldier taken prisoner, as it is usual at the end of the war.

To this we beg to point out that we are Jews without exception, that we were forced to flee from Germany after most of us had been kept in German concentration camps for months.

It is not our intention to return to Germany under any circumstances.

In the name of justice and human rights we beg you to take note of our present protest, to pass it on to the British authorities competent, to recognize our particular position as Refugees from Nazi Oppression, and to have our status rectified accordingly.

¹⁴¹ Eric Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 98.

Thanking you in anticipation, we beg to remain, very respectfully yours, Martin Fischer.¹⁴²

In the letter of 1941 to his brothers in Israel, quoted earlier, Fischer alludes to the fact that he had achieved some progress by that time in terms of gaining recognition by Canadian authorities of the real situation of these poor refugees whose unjust internment at the hands of Nazi, British and Canadian authorities was dragging on into its third or fourth years. “Being regarded as refugees now, we are permitted to receive visitors”, Fischer writes.¹⁴³ But it would not be until early in 1942 as a result of the intervention of one of these visitors, a wealthy Jewish businessman from Toronto by the name of Ben Sadowsky, that Fischer would be released and sponsored to continue his medical studies at U of T. He described his good fortune in the letter to his brothers in this way:

There will perhaps be a chance for me of being released in Canada to complete my studies at one of the Canadian Universities. As a matter of fact, a very influential gentleman whom I happened to meet at our camp is very much interested in me and told the immigration authorities that he is willing to pay everything and to take full responsibility for me until I get my degree. He also made an application for release for me. It would be simply wonderful if it works out alright. Being a free man I could do a lot more for our dearest parents.¹⁴⁴

Relative to the fate of many Viennese Jews deported to Dachau or Auschwitz, the internment of Martin Fischer and others at Camp I might, from hindsight, seem like a stroke of good luck. However, the hardships of their position also deserve recognition. Whether they allowed themselves such sadness out of respect for the greater suffering of their friends and family is doubtful. One might suspect that a repressed rage and survivor guilt must have simmered under the surface for many of these men for the rest of their lives. One can perhaps detect these feelings in the surprisingly coarse and vehement language the otherwise articulate and soft-spoken Martin Fischer used in letters after the war to condemn the allied authorities for letting Nazi War Criminals off too lightly. However, as was so often the case, Martin Fischer seemed to deal constructively with his own inner turmoil by turning it into an opportunity to hone his psychiatric skills. According to Eric Koch, Martin Fischer acknowledged in conversation that his prior commitment to a career in psychiatry had made the whole experience, “a little easier for me than for others”. Koch writes that:

For Martin Fischer, who intended to become a psychiatrist, internment provided an excellent opportunity to “study people in crisis”. Intuitively and objectively he could provide support to others, some relief and some perspective.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Fischer to Internment Operations, August 3rd, 1940, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹⁴³ Fischer to his Brothers, Samuel and David, October 31, 1941, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹⁴⁴ Fischer to Brothers, Samuel and David, October 31, 1941, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹⁴⁵ Eric Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 171.

The example that Koch gives of the kind of emotional crisis that Martin Fischer had to deal with as Camp Leader involved the temptation to homosexual activity, which according to Koch was engaged in by over 50 % of the sexually segregated internees even though most of them were otherwise, “perfectly straight”:

Martin Fischer, leader in Camp I, had to deal with one of the cooks who had been discovered having some sort of homosexual relationship. “I was surprised by the vehemence of the response”, he told me, “because somehow people began to associate homosexual practices in the kitchen with food. It became an explosive issue, and the demand was made for the cook to be removed from the kitchen. This was one of those situations where it was difficult to restore reason through objectively oriented discussion”.¹⁴⁶

One can see by this example how, rather than having found some safe haven from the Holocaust, the internees at Camp I were so wracked to the core by identity issues involving their heritage and masculinity that even food became a symbol for them of social impotence. Martin Fischer was not the only one to see the psychoanalytic significance of his experience as a refugee from Nazi oppression, and to pursue its implications in his career as a psychiatrist. Another more famous Viennese refugee, Bruno Bettelheim, was also driven by his concentration camp experiences at Dachau and Buchenwald to explore the psychological impact of the Nazi terror in his role as a psychoanalyst and Director of the Orthogenic School at U of C. What is perhaps more remarkable than the fact that both these Viennese victims of the Holocaust found themselves pursuing their psychoanalytic careers in nearby Chicago and Toronto, and the fact that they both happened to focus their attention on the intersections between psychoanalysis and education, was that they both were to become mentors to John R. Seeley.

iii) Toronto Psychoanalytic Study Circle

With the support of Ben Sadowsky’s sponsorship, Martin Fischer graduated from medical school at U of T in 1943. In 1944 he married Beatrice Shapiro, a very lovely and articulate young Jewish woman who, as we have already seen, was from, of all places, Woodstock Ontario. Her father, a tailor, owned a menswear shop in Woodstock. He had moved his family from New York to Woodstock to escape the deadly Spanish Influenza pandemic that was spreading through the city like wildfire in 1918. In a letter she had sent to Martin’s parents in Vienna in 1945, Beatrice boasted that she had won his heart even though he “wasn’t at all interested in girls”.¹⁴⁷ Instead, he was focused on the fulfillment of his youthful ambition to become a psychiatrist. He succeeded in this quest in 1947,

¹⁴⁶ Eric Koch, *Deemed Suspect*, 157-158.

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Beatrice Fischer, 1 October 2009.

when he became a certified specialist in psychiatry with the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons in Ontario. He joined the Department of Psychiatry at U of T in 1948, the same year that John R. Seeley was also hired by the Department as a sociologist and as Director of the Forest Hill Village Project. It was also the same year that Martin Fischer's "selige Mutter" died in a Tel Aviv hospital.

Martin Fischer's journey from Vienna to Toronto and its contextual setting in the tragic history of European anti-semitism and warfare might help to explain certain peculiarities of his career as a psychiatrist. Fischer consistently sought to break down barriers to the democratization of psychoanalysis in his efforts to apply it in educational settings. For example, Fischer acted as the consulting psychiatrist to the experimental group home for troubled children in Newmarket made famous in Allan King's documentary, *Warrendale*. Fischer appears in the film which won the International Critics Prize at the Cannes Film Festival in 1967. Fischer also demonstrated his openness to alternative forms of therapy as the founder and first President of the Canadian Art Therapy Association. In these efforts to defy the authority of academic discipline, perhaps Martin Fischer felt he was achieving some form of substitute victory over the Nazi authorities in relation to whom he had once been powerless. One might also sense that Martin Fischer's interest in the educational applications of psychoanalysis were related to his enduring commitment to the social activism of Anna Freud and other second generation psychoanalytic pedagogues from Vienna with whom he identified.

According to Seeley, it was because of his influence that Martin Fischer was hired by the Department of Psychiatry at U of T as its first psychoanalyst, even though officially this had been done by the new Head of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital, Aldwyn Stokes:

In hiring professionals to staff the TPH, Dr Stokes' eclecticism was very evident. For example, he appointed the first psychoanalyst to the University of Toronto, Dr Martin Fischer. His first professionally trained social worker, Morton Teicher, was lured from the Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic, and sociologist Jack Seeley was also appointed. As interest was high in social psychiatry in the 1960s (as it had been in psychoanalysis in the 1950s), Dr Stokes hired people from various disciplines to establish a therapeutic community approach...¹⁴⁸

On the one hand, there are reasons to accept the plausibility of Seeley's claim considering, in particular, the star status that Seeley had at this time achieved in the eyes of the senior medical mandarins at the Canadian National Committee for Mental Health and the Toronto Psychiatric

¹⁴⁸ Louise Ellis, "'Aldwyn B. Stokes': The Man and His Contribution to Canadian Psychiatry".

Hospital. Stokes had picked up Seeley from the CNMCH in 1947, where he was serving as an Executive Officer and was busily drawing up ambitious plans for a national mental health revolution. Stokes quickly made this brash, brainy young sociologist the centerpiece of his new initiative to broaden the scope of the psychiatric hospital's jurisdiction into the field of social medicine. Perhaps as a *quid pro quo*, Seeley had asked that the Department broaden its horizons by opening up its loopholes in order to hire a Jewish, psychoanalytically-oriented psychiatrist like Fischer. As we have already seen, there were hidden quotas at the University, even after the war, in terms of the number of Jews who could be hired on staff or admitted as students.¹⁴⁹

Now, it may have been true that Stokes, who had been an advocate of eugenicist measures for the prevention of mental health issues, shared in the popular resentment against psychoanalysis as a so-called Jewish science. Beatrice Fischer recalls not liking the man whom her husband, and others she had known, had felt was a secret anti-semiter. Stokes was however, in any case not so much of an anti-semiter that he would blow against the winds that had brought popularity to psychoanalysis in the Americas after the war. He possibly even saw it as to his advantage, as part of the demonstration of the new eclectic approach he brought to the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital, to hire someone with Martin Fischer's pedigree. Therefore, he may have listened when Seeley put forward Fischer's name as a prospective member of the new psychiatric team at U of T.

But why would Seeley do this, especially since it would seem that this was to wade into dangerous waters at the time? The plausibility of Seeley's story that he intervened on Fischer's behalf here deepens because of the natural attraction the two men were likely to have had to each other given their personal backgrounds. They were both from German Jewish families. They were both intellectuals with a dedicated interest in psychoanalysis. They were both in Canada as refugees from abusive situations in Europe, though in the case of Seeley his had been a private form of child abuse, rather than the more publicly administered Nazi terror in Austria that Fischer had escaped. However, even their differences must have had a magnetic effect between them, Fischer was from a poor family, while Seeley was from a rich family. At six feet tall, with a gracious Viennese German accent, the commanding presence of Fischer which had led to his being chosen as a leader of the Jewish Refugees at Camp I stood in contrast to the elfin stature of Seeley, who rolled his R's in typical British aristocratic fashion and whose faint German accent was barely detectable in the torrent of words he unleashed on just about any subject. Fischer was succinct and practical in thought and

¹⁴⁹ Charles Levi, "'The Jewish Quota in the Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto': Generational Memory Sustained by Documentation", *Historical Studies in Education* 15, 1 (2003), 131-38.

gesture, where Seeley waved his arms, and adorned even the most mundane observations with flowery language. Perhaps most importantly, Seeley was accepted as part of the in-crowd amongst the Toronto medical elite because of his presentation as a British aristocrat, where Fischer was struggling to break in from the outside to ensure the security of his place in a society he knew was not that different from the one he had already fled. In other words, these two men were the perfect foils for each other.

Seeley also found in Fischer the father figure he had always wanted. His first memory of Fischer, which he shared with Fischer's daughter Erica, captured the idealized father figure role into which he cast him from the start of their relationship. She reported that on the car ride back from the cemetery after the burial of Martin Fischer in the winter of 1992, Seeley reminisced about how he had been attending rounds at the Doctors' Hospital near Kensington Market in Toronto; which had been established, by the way, so that young Jewish doctors could complete internships that were not available to them at most Ontario Hospitals; when Martin Fischer was called upon to demonstrate psychiatric technique in the treatment of a catatonic child patient at the Hospital. Apparently, no one at the hospital had succeeded in getting this child to speak. As Seeley watched in awe, Martin Fischer sat down facing the child and placed his hands on his lap with their palms facing up, presumably as a gesture of invitation. The child got up and walked over to Martin Fischer and himself undid a button on the Doctor's clinical white coat and nuzzled inside as if to hide himself. From there, the boy could be heard to speak to the Doctor. This memory trace seems more like a dream than an historical testimony. The prominence of the use of the hands by Martin Fischer gives this story the aura of an 18th century exercise in magnetism in the style of Franz Anton Mesmer. But for Seeley it probably evoked the kind of Christ – like image one might guess he wanted to see in Martin Fischer. At another level, perhaps Seeley's own search for a protective father figure enabled him to identify with the boy at that moment. Perhaps Seeley himself wished he could hide under the protective cloak of Martin Fischer's strength and courage. The scene is much like that in a phantasy Seeley had once confessed to Martin Fischer:

... you are – too kind, so gentle, so understanding
Terrific yearning to run to you, bury my head on your shoulder
Sit on your legs
I'd cry there.¹⁵⁰

¹⁵⁰ Fischer's Notes, November 20, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

For Fischer, on the other hand, to give a voice to a catatonic child, or to someone like Seeley who had been unable to speak to anyone about his inner reality, must have satisfied something missing in himself. Might that have been the suppressed fear and rage he had to publicly stifle in order to advance his career ambitions amidst constant danger of social ostracism? In all of his letters during and after the war on behalf of the many others he voluntarily sought to help to break free of the Nazi terror, Martin Fischer was unfailingly polite and gracious in his dealings with authority. When Seeley unleashed his anger against such figures in their conversations, did Martin Fischer also find some form of vicarious catharsis? By helping Seeley to control his anger, did Martin Fischer achieve self-control?

John R. Seeley said that Martin Fischer was very interested in ways to address the problem of the individualized focus of psychoanalysis. He wanted to reach more people with the technique, and this was why he sought to apply it in the forms of group and art therapy. Seeley went so far as to suggest that Martin Fischer was so motivated to create opportunities for self-expression for others that he perhaps could have been criticized for not having spent enough time with his family. Comments by members of the family in regard to his frequent absence due to his workload, and his tendency to be critical and judgemental of his own children, in contrast to the tenets of the doctrine he espoused in his public responsibilities, would seem to bear out Seeley's observation. What if, from another perspective, the compulsion Martin Fischer felt to work for the sake of the expressive opportunities of others was compensation for his own inability to allow himself the same? What he felt, what he knew, seemed to have been too terrible to impose on others. He did not want to relive himself, nor subject his family to the experience of an inner turmoil rooted in the horrific experience of the Holocaust. So he escaped, as so many of us do from much less traumatic experiences, into his work.

Another of the peculiarities of Martin Fischer's career was that, despite his personal identification with Freud, and his application of Freudian techniques and theory in his practice as a psychiatrist and art therapist, he never completed formal training as a psychoanalyst. He never underwent his own analysis as a required part of the training of a psychoanalyst with the Canadian Psychoanalytic Society, a Branch of the International Psychoanalytic Association, which was originally founded by Freud. This is surprising given that he was a member of the original Toronto Psychoanalytic Study Circle founded in 1956, along with Dr's Parkin, Schiffer and Thomson who were to become founding members of the Toronto Psychoanalytic Institute, which was finally recognized by the International Psychoanalytic Society in 1969. As part of that germinal group Martin Fischer attended regular Wednesday evening meetings, presumably in honour of the meetings Freud had held of the original

group in Vienna on Wednesday nights, which often focussed around the lectures of visiting psychoanalysts from England, the United States and Quebec. In fact, when the Montreal Psychoanalytic Institute began to train prospective analysts in 1958, Martin Fischer wrote a letter requesting an application form for psychoanalytic training to Dr. Aufreiter who had moved there from Vienna.¹⁵¹ Dr. Aufreiter had done his own training analysis with August Aichorn who was a principal member of Freud's Wednesday night group meetings, and a founder of psychoanalytic pedagogy. One would think this would have been of great interest to Martin Fischer, but the training analysis was never undertaken. Perhaps with five small children and a busy practise in Toronto, Martin Fischer just did not have the time for regular travel to Montreal.

Moreover, both his wife and daughter Erica suggested that Martin Fischer had never really wanted to undertake his own analysis. It may have been the case that he had only applied out of a sense of professional duty, but according to Beatrice Fischer, Martin had in fact gotten as far in his application as to be formally rejected as an unsuitable candidate by one of the founding training analysts with the Canadian Psychoanalytic Society, Dr. Nathan B. Epstein. Beatrice Fischer's recollection of this rejection was that her husband Martin had been terribly angered by it. Beatrice remembers that the reasons given by Epstein had been that Martin was not, "ready for", or, "accessible to", psychoanalysis.¹⁵² In a way this judgement would seem to be consistent with the recollections of both Martin's wife and eldest daughter that he did not want to undertake his own analysis, and that he was not an introspective type of person, however strange such a description may sound in the context of his personal identification with Freud. But then why would Martin have been so angry about the rejection of the Canadian Psychoanalytic Institute?

We can rule out anti-semitism as a motivation for Epstein's rejection of Fischer, since both men were Jewish, but this does leave us with one other possible explanation for Epstein's decision. Perhaps, in the course of a training analysis already being undertaken between Epstein and Fischer, the boundary violations that the latter had already committed by the late 1950s in his relationship with of John R. Seeley were revealed to Epstein. In light of that evidence, he was forced to bring an end to Fischer's training analysis. If this were the case, then it could be concluded that in Fischer's view he was being punished for his efforts to democratize psychoanalysis.

¹⁵¹ Fischer to Aufreiter, March 13, 1958, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹⁵² Interview with Beatrice Fischer, 20 July 2009

There is also evidence in the Fischer Papers that the unorthodox quality in Fischer's approach to psychiatry also brought him into conflict with members of his own profession. There is an undated letter written in the hand of Seeley in which Fischer complains of injustice in his having been forced to resign as the head of the psychiatric service at Mt. Sinai Hospital. The contents of the letter suggest that it would have been sent, if at all, sometime in the early 1960s. It would appear that Fischer had turned to his friend Seeley to bring to bear his great expressive skills on the writing of the resignation letter:

... I would be dishonest if I did not say that I would have wished to carry to completion or at least a stage further the work I have begun and, carried along so far. I say "would have wished" because from my conversation with Dr. Kohan, the continued holding of the wish has been made impossible. Without even arguing that it is just, or indicating that it is in some demonstrable way to the best interest of the service or the hospital, he has advised me that my interests would be best served by my resigning. He adds that the M. A. C. has recommended against reappointment in any case, and that the lay board automatically (!) endorses such recommendations.

I have no desire to hang on for personal reasons to a post that entails labour and difficulty even though it would also permit me to serve the hospital in a way which would, I believe, have been good for it. But more than my interests are at stake. A question of justice is involved, with the consequences of which I and the hospital must live hereafter. In effect, I have, without a semblance of judicial or judicious process, been asked to resign under the contention that the alternative consequences would be worse, and that there is no appeal or further discussion possible.

I want to continue to serve at Mt. Sinai in any case. If Mt. Sinai wants a forced resignation from the position of Head of the Section of Psychiatry, it may so consider this letter. If this is quoted as a resignation, it is requested that the whole and not some excerpt from it be so quoted.¹⁵³

The fact of the writing of this letter by Seeley on behalf of Fischer is almost as interesting as what its contents reveal. It illustrates the close collegial and friendly relationship between the two men. It also may help to explain their feelings of being isolated and under siege as Jewish intellectuals committed to psychoanalysis in a Gentile dominated system of institution that had little tolerance for "free association" of any kind. Now, given his already strong predilection toward the defiance of authority, the experience of rejection by the elite of the Canadian Psychoanalytic Society and Mt Sinai Hospital, may have only added fuel to the fire of Fischer's interest in such experiments as Warrendale, the Art Therapy Institute of Canada, and perhaps also the conduct of free, informal psychoanalyses of friends like John R. Seeley. In any event, though Martin Fischer had succeeded in becoming a medical psychiatrist, he never became an officially certified psychoanalyst with the Canadian Psychoanalytic Society. This fact renders inaccurate the claims of both Seeley and the

¹⁵³ Fischer resignation letter, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

Canadian Psychiatric Association Bulletin that he was the first psychoanalyst with the U of T, Department of Psychiatry.

3. The Impostor

i) A Criminal Career

If we are next to explore what is revealed about John R. Seeley and the Forest Hill Village Project in his confessions to his friend Martin Fischer, we must first form a thesis in terms of which we can sift through the mass of evidence in the Fischer Papers. It would be unfair, if not impossible, to reduce Seeley to a particular psychiatric category, but the more literary trope of the impostor is called to mind by the difficulty of finding any core to the man. We have previously characterized Seeley as a martyr because of his almost religious sense of mission. However, stripped of this veneer of Christianity, the martyr becomes an impostor. Seeley's claims to self-sacrifice in the interests of justice begin to take on a hollow ring in an era when, as Thrasymachus predicted, "... just or right means nothing but what is to the interest of the stronger".¹⁵⁴ It would seem that Foucault has given us the reason why the martyr must today be stripped of his pretense to religiosity in this way. Taking up Nietzsche's prophecy of the death of God, Foucault shows us the random ways that power operates in the post-modern era. Having been thus shorn of its divine clarity and purpose we must now understand history in terms of this blind play of forces. In turn, the individual's place in history is also torn to shreds. In vain he may search for authenticity, all the while falling more deeply into various states of imposture. We may take this point of view as our starting point in our search for understanding of Seeley's fall into mental illness..

When Seeley left England he had lost his faith and his sense of integrity. As he wrote later to his brother, his personality became so fragmented that he nearly turned to a life of crime:

When in 1929 Mamma told me in the way she did – in hate and anger and intent to do maximum damage – of my origin, my being nobody (she proposed to take away my name, Papa's photo, all symbols of any root anywhere) she opened up floodgates of terror and hate beyond my capacity to manage. I think three broad possibilities opened up – insanity, crime (or a legal equivalent) or something like the neurotic course I took.¹⁵⁵

If we consider Seeley's life in merely career terms we can justify the thesis that he had tendencies toward imposture on the basis of the fact that at various times in his life he claimed to be an educator,

¹⁵⁴ Plato, *The Republic*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), 17.

¹⁵⁵ Seeley to his brother Frank, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

Ph. D., psychoanalyst, and sociologist yet he held no formal credentials to legitimize these claims. In this way, he was a character much like his contemporary Ferdinand Waldo Demara who became the most famous American of this type as a result of the 1960 novel by Robert Crichton entitled, *The Great Impostor*. This novel topped the New York Times bestseller list and was followed in 1961 by a Hollywood film by the same name, starring Tony Curtis. Curiously, Seeley claimed to be many of the very same things that Demara claimed to be - a doctor, professor, psychologist, child-care expert, and teacher. Of course, Seeley never went so far as to pose as a surgeon aboard a Royal Canadian Navy Ship during the Korean War, but he did run into trouble from time to time because of his exaggerated claims. In another letter, we see again that Seeley had a vague consciousness of his fraudulent tendencies:

....after toying with the idea of continued rebellion via a criminal or exploitive career, for which I probably lacked the strength – I soon discovered that it was really very easy to ‘please’ people by being helpful, and that I had a talent for it.¹⁵⁶

What Seeley seems to overlook in this moment of self-reflection, is that the eagerness to please others, if exaggerated, quickly takes the form of false claims in regard to one’s own powers. Indeed, Seeley’s talent for pleasing people seems to have lain in his ability to make them believe that he had powers that he did not really have, but which others were willing to believe he had because they wanted it to be true. Again, Seeley seems to have been best able to articulate the *modus operandi* of the imposter and its association to a talent for pleasing others. However, we must first set up the following passage with a little historical context. Here Seeley is referring to his time spent in “participant-observation” field-work with back-street gangs while a Ph.D. student at U of C:

Until the Forest Hill Village Project, I could usually, not without some sense of danger – have it both ways. Even operating with my delinquents Back-of-the-Yards I could laugh sympathetically with them at the antics of middle class people while on campus I could be “interesting” by describing slum-life to comfortable people.¹⁵⁷

Another piece of evidence we might put forward as an introductory example of this theme is found in a somewhat apologetic letter of reference written on Seeley’s behalf by Norman Bell who was a member of the Forest Hill Village Project Research Staff. Bell was writing to the leaders of the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education where Seeley had applied for a job in the 1970s. He attempted to reassure them of Seeley’s authenticity as a sociologist despite the following rumour:

¹⁵⁶ Seeley to Fischer, October 21, 1953, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹⁵⁷ Seeley to Fischer, October 21, 1955, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

I have heard from a variety of sources that the following year Seeley had difficulties in the teaching of a statistics course and that the University had to resort to its ancient prerogative of “raising” to preserve academic standards.¹⁵⁸

Finally, we might also refer to the following vignette, offered by Seeley himself as evidence of his prowess in later life as a child psychoanalyst. Seeley related this story to an audience of his former friends and colleagues in the Toronto area in 1993 on the occasion of his eightieth birthday. He talked about how he had playfully licked food off a young boy’s fingers as part of his treatment for a food phobia, presumably to desensitize him, and even went so far as to agree to the child’s request to cover his whole body with food:

Then with a look of the sort that presaged something of importance, he asked with a lot of affect, “Would you dab this on me?” While I hesitated (I did not see how we could do it on the study carpet or the front lawn) he removed his shirt and, with a single flick of his zipper, his shorts; he had been barefoot, so he was bare now except for his underpants. To my hesitation, he rejoined, “ok, let’s do it in the alley”. (There is an alley that runs past one side of my office – a throughway for trucks – a way to and from school for young children and accompanying parents, a play area for older boys, a busy place). I assented and we went. To critical looks from male truckers and female parents I dabbed the paste practically all over him from head to toe. A sort of ecstatic content settled on him as he found himself finally encased in food (except for his eyes and genitals) like sausage in a sausage roll.¹⁵⁹

Seeley claimed that this experience of self – expression cured the boy of his food phobia. One might dismiss this so-called clinical example of a breakthrough in child psychoanalysis as some kind of wacky Californian integrated therapy. From a layman’s perspective, there is a tendency to sympathize with the “critical looks” of those parents who were witnesses to this strange episode. The question raised by these introductory examples, however, is whether they might serve as evidence that Seeley had tendencies toward imposture in his capacity as either a professor or a child psychoanalyst. Of course, they would not suffice in themselves to prove anything, but considered in the context of the evidence that emerges from a study of the career of John R. Seeley, I believe a case can be made. Toward that end we must first define the term impostor more precisely.

It is of the very essence of the impostor, according to the psychoanalytic literature on the subject, that he is an adept manipulator of his particular social milieu. Ironically, Phyllis Greenacre presented a paper entitled, “The Impostor”, at the last gathering of the Toronto Psychoanalytic Study Circle

¹⁵⁸ Dr. Norman Bell to Prof E.B. Harvey, Chairman, Department of Sociology, OISE, May 27th, 1974. Library and Archives Canada, File: Prof John Seeley, OISE, (4 of 5) 1972 – 1977, Q5 – 24868

¹⁵⁹ John R Seeley, “Tales and Tallies: Reflections of a Life-Long Activist/Theoretician”. Unpublished Speech in celebration of his 80th birthday, April 19th, 1993 University of Toronto, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

attended by Martin Fischer in June of 1958. In it she explained the relation of the impostor to his times:

Indeed, in some of the most celebrated instances of imposture, it appears that the fraud was successful only because others as well as the original perpetrator has a need and even a hunger to believe in the false rather than the true character, and that such fraudulence coming into any pronounced form depended in fact on strong social as well as individual factors, and special receptivity in the situation. To a certain extent those on whom the fraudulence has been imposed are not only victims but co-operators. Its success too is partly a matter of timing. Such combinations of imposturous talent and the peculiar susceptibility of the times for the belief in the swindler who would present the means of salvation may produce the great impostors of history.¹⁶⁰

We have seen that the trope of the impostor held a special fascination for Seeley's era and we referred in this context to the popularity of the movie, *The Great Impostor*. Yet, what was it about Demara's reincarnations during the fifties as teacher, doctor, child-care worker, and psychologist that appealed to the mood of the times? This question almost answers itself in the sense that it was the era of Dr. Spock, the baby boom and ambitious social engineering initiative like the Forest Hill Village Project. It would seem that the concern of the hyper-technological post-war era with burgeoning forms of expertise, perhaps especially in the mental health field, and the accompanying terror of being manipulated by some-one whose powers far exceed your own, was tapped into by Demara and Seeley. Yet, we might also see the character type of the impostor holding a particular fascination for a culture in which the intensifying gaze of the modern expert, personified in the role of psychoanalyst, had rendered people highly sensitive to their social environment. We might introduce here the concept of the "other-directed character" that was popularized in David Riesman's famous book of that era entitled *The Lonely Crowd*. Riesman's characterology is especially relevant in light of the fact that he was another one of Seeley's many substitute father figures. Indeed, the public fascination with the impostor in the fifties might serve as evidence of Riesman's claim that people were losing their inner moral compass in favour of a more flexible, chameleon-like adaptability to rapidly changing social conditions. In this view, the impostor was a prototypical fifties man; a Willy Loman who wanted to be all things to all people and in the process lost his soul. As an impostor, therefore, Seeley may have only been a particularly successful example of a man of his times.

ii) Boundary Crossing

The nature of the strange psychoanalytic process which Seeley claimed had gone on between he and Martin Fischer was itself characterized by a good deal of imposture. Over and over again Seeley

¹⁶⁰ Phyllis Greenacre, "The Impostor", *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 27, 1958 (3) 2

refers to himself as the analysand and to Martin Fischer as the first psychoanalyst with the Department of Psychiatry at U of T, and as his personal analyst. As we have seen, however, Martin Fischer was a psychiatrist but he was not a qualified psychoanalyst. In fact, the first psychoanalyst recognized by the International Association for Psychoanalysis to practise in Toronto was Alan Parkin who did not arrive until 1954, long after Fischer and Seeley's relationship had gotten well underway. It was true that in the early post-war period in North America psychoanalysis had begun to have a powerful influence on psychiatric practice. Many psychiatrists during the fifties who had not undertaken their own analysis as part of the rigorous training of psychoanalysts, were nevertheless integrating Freudian concepts in their practises. As we have already seen, academic psychiatrists like Martin Fischer were already teaching courses to psychiatric residents at U of T by 1948 in psychodynamics. Moreover, there was very little integration at this time in the standards and methods of psychiatric practise. Even Dr. Parkin, who was hailed as a, "pioneer, a leader, and perhaps might be called a missionary who brought psychoanalysis to Ontario", eventually proved to be an imposter of sorts himself. Parkin was stripped of his membership in the Toronto Psychoanalytic Society when it was discovered toward the end of his career that he had been, "carrying out sexual activities with patients".¹⁶¹

Medical psychotherapy has, however, come a long way since the 1950s toward achieving a more integrated and professional stance:

Fifty years ago, physicians treated severely mentally ill people by wrapping them in ice-cold sheets; the wrapping immobilized the patients, while the cold supposedly calmed them. Repeated electroconvulsive therapy was one of the only other instruments used to treat severe mental illness, and as a result physicians often overused it, with sometimes catastrophic results. Fifty years ago, there were no drug therapies specifically designed to combat mental illness, while treatments such as insulin shock therapy, which were used to treat schizophrenia, were spectacularly unsuccessful. The value of specific and tailored psychotherapeutic techniques for different groups of patients had not yet been determined, and misapplication of treatments was widespread, even within the psychotherapies.¹⁶²

By the 1980s the Canadian Medical Association had begun to work on an annotated Code of Ethics for Psychiatrists which clarified many of the ambiguities around doctor-patient relationships in terms of consent, experimentation, and exploitation. It is interesting to note in this regard that the The 1996 CMA Code of Ethics Annotated for Psychiatrists states that, "the nature of the psychiatrist-patient relationship generally precludes the psychiatric treatment of anyone whose personal or family history

¹⁶¹ Frayn, *Psychoanalysis in Toronto*, 167

¹⁶² Paul E. Garfinkel, "Psychiatry in the New Millenium", *Can J Psychiatry* 2000;45:40-47

is familial knowledge".¹⁶³ Clearly, then, the relationship between Fischer and Seeley would be viewed as unethical by present-day standards. But is it fair to apply present standards to past situations? Indeed, it might have been that it was not unusual for a psychiatrist in the 1950s to be best friends with his patient.

While on the one hand, Fischer's experimentation with psychoanalysis may have been, generally speaking, typical of the time, on the other hand, he would likely have been one of the few psychiatrists in Toronto to have such an interest. As we have seen, the leadership at the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital and in the Department of Psychiatry from C. K. Clarke, to C. B. Farrar and his successor Aldwyn Stokes were notoriously resistant to psychoanalysis. It was not until Robyn Hunter, who became a founding member and training analyst with the Canadian Institute of Psychoanalysis, Ontario Branch in 1967, and at the same time accepted an appointment as successor to Aldwyn Stokes at the U of T Department of Psychiatry, that psychoanalysis gained any legitimacy at all in the inner circles of Toronto's psychiatric establishment. According to Doug Frayn, who was a student of Robyn Hunter's and accompanied him from Queen's University to U of T there was a very hostile environment to psychoanalysis in Toronto at the time:

The rumours I had heard about there being intellectual hostility towards depth psychology at the U of T seemed to be confirmed, because whenever the subject of psychoanalysis arose, it was spoken of as an unscientific activity, practised by unenlightened if not amoral therapists...Studies suggested that being on the waiting list without any treatment was superior to having psychoanalytic therapy, and they saw it as essentially a moribund procedure conducted by a ship of fools. The Clarke associates informed me that my psychoanalytic training at the Toronto Institute of Psychoanalysis could not be considered an academic pursuit. I have found little evidence that there has been any change in this negative attitude by the University's medical school, even now after thirty years.¹⁶⁴

So, in light of this context of hostility toward psychoanalysis in Toronto, there was some truth in the idea that Martin Fischer was amongst the first psychiatrists to have had an interest in integrating psychoanalytic techniques in his practise. What may carry more significance for an understanding of the relationship between Fischer and Seeley, however, was the siege mentality they may have felt as they pursued their intuitive preference for psychoanalysis. Perhaps, in part, the under-currents of professional disapproval pushed them toward conducting their psychoanalytic project informally and secretly. Undoubtedly, they felt that the resistance to psychoanalysis in English culture was associated to subtle forms of anti-semitism that lurked in Canadian society at the time.

¹⁶³ Grainne Neilson, *The 1996 CMA Code of Ethics Annotated for Psychiatrists*, Canadian Psychiatric Association, 2002, s. b) i) 11

¹⁶⁴ Frayn, *Psychoanalysis in Toronto*, 154-155.

In any event, it is clear from the notes that Martin Fischer kept for a few months during the early stages of their experiment, that they were engaged in some kind of informal psychoanalysis that involved dream-like, even poetic, streams of consciousness from Seeley. Many of these notes are marked at the top in capitals by “FA”, which was short for free association, the classic psychoanalytic technique. The following passage is taken from a page of those notes which gives a feeling for their almost poetic character:

FA

...in Nanny's house
 Again my lips seem unusually dry and stiff
 Beet with three leaflets, daffodils – very clearly –
 Remember going out to pick
 Remember going out with Servant at Nanny's
 Nettles
 Feeling of delight re – Daffodils and narcissi
 Inner circle of pedals, delicacy
 In a smell
 Watercress
 Narcissism – Happy time...¹⁶⁵

While it may have been professionally uncommon in Toronto for psychiatrists to apply psychoanalytic techniques in their treatment of patients given the prevailing cynicism in regard to the procedure, the general social popularity of psychoanalysis in the early post-war period often found expression in colleagues or friends around the world dabbling in private kinds of casual intermittent psychoanalyses like that engaged in by Fischer and Seeley. Indeed, to describe the dialogue between Seeley and Fischer as revealed in the Fischer Papers as a private confession in which they explored psychoanalysis out of mutual curiosity seems to be fairest both to the professional reputation of Dr. Fischer and to the historical credibility of our argument.

One of the reasons that their relationship likely should not be referred to as a medical treatment was the very inconsistent evidence in regard to whether or not John R. Seeley paid for his time with Martin Fischer. Of course, given the nature of their social relationship which involved personal, collegial and family get-togethers at the office, the park, at home and in restaurants, it would have been very difficult to determine when a session had begun or ended. Perhaps that is why, as Beatrice Fischer recounted with frustration, Martin Fischer once said to her, “Don't make him pay”.¹⁶⁶ Even when they did meet in Fischer's office the evidence would suggest that it was at irregular times. For

¹⁶⁵ Fischer's Notes, October 9th, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹⁶⁶ Interview with Beatrice Fischer, 15 December 2010

example, the key to understanding the one scene Seeley recounted for me from his psychoanalysis, in which he had felt that he had discovered the depth of the transferential hostility he was projecting onto Martin Fischer, was that the two were meeting at lunch-time. Given that the secretary was out at this time, according to Seeley, Fischer would answer the phone while they were talking. This enraged Seeley who felt that this was inconsiderate and unprofessional. This scene recounted for me over fifty years later in our interviews in Los Angeles, actually made its way into Fischer's notes. Fischer records Seeley as saying:

I am sweating and I feel as I felt after my Mother had walked out of room
 Sulky and alone – resented the interruption
 Which couldn't be helped
 Frustrated the most – he ought to have a telephone service
 Not properly set up – a good analyst would not let himself be interrupted
 Keep his hours sacred – triumph achieved after saying it.¹⁶⁷

Beatrice Fischer said that her husband did not refer to John R. Seeley as his patient. Similarly, Seeley would not likely have referred to himself at the time as a patient of Martin Fischer's when he was at the office. It is more likely that over time, as the story of his psychoanalysis grew larger and larger in the style of a tall tale that Seeley came to refer to himself as the analysand, and to Martin Fischer as the analyst. In fact, what really happened was that one day Martin brought John Seeley home from work and introduced him as his colleague at the Department of Psychiatry, according to Beatrice Fischer's recollections. Indeed, why wouldn't Fischer be socially courteous to the man who had made it possible for Fischer to join the psychiatry department?

On the other hand, there is some evidence of payments from Seeley to Fischer that might suggest their meetings were in fact thought of by both men as a course of medical treatment. In both 1952 and 1959, there are appointments scheduled in Fischer's agenda book for Seeley alongside his other patients, though in Seeley's case he was always in arrears for payments. It may have been that Seeley paid when he could for his sessions with Fischer. For example, there are a series of letters in the Fischer Papers written from Indiannapolis, where Seeley moved in 1954 following the conclusion of the active phase of the Forest Hill Village Research Project, in which Seeley attaches "payments" though it is not stated what the payments are for. It would be logical to assume that they were for the psychoanalytic sessions, though it is possible that Fischer had given Seeley a loan of some other kind that he was repaying. This question should be raised because it is hard to understand why Seeley would be able to pay from Indiannapolis, but not while he was in Toronto. He had a good job with

¹⁶⁷ Fischer's Notes, Oct 15th, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

the Department of Psychiatry while he was in Toronto. Moreover, he obviously was not paying contemporaneously with the sessions if he had to continue payments after he left for Indianapolis. At least he was not paying fully. If we look at the sardonic tone of the following letter, supposedly with an attached cheque, we might suspect that the payments were more for Beatrice's sake than for Martin Fischer's:

Here is Beatrice's pin money for February. Pretty big pin! Now you've put it on that basis I'm going to feel like a heel when the payments quit. Visions of Beatrice and the children in rags – or, the modern day equivalent, unable to afford a good psychiatrist. When are you coming to Indianapolis? We are saving a special bottle for the happy event.¹⁶⁸

At another time Seeley sent a letter addressed to both Martin and Beatrice with regard to payments:

Dear Martin and Beatrice,

Another little blue slip – but not many more to come (how many by the way?) How are things going? And when are you coming to see us – both of you? We think of you often and fondly.

'Jack',¹⁶⁹

Perhaps Fischer was not really concerned about whether Seeley made payments, but his wife, who was raising five children, insisted upon it. After all, as Beatrice proudly asserted, she was in charge of overseeing her husband's financial arrangements with his patients. Despite realizing that it was not really appropriate to ask Seeley to pay, perhaps Martin agreed to do so at least early in their relationship. For her part, Beatrice Fischer was surprised to learn that there was any record of payments having been made by Seeley at all. Her recollection was that John R. Seeley would always arrange informal meetings with Martin in order to continue their psychoanalysis, but not have to pay. They would often meet in a coffee shop, or go for a walk in the park. She had always been very suspicious about these attempts, in her eyes, to avoid making payments because, she said, "he was cheap" and "a fraud"; though she would always follow-up such critical comments about John R. Seeley by saying "but he loved me and I loved him".¹⁷⁰ She said that Seeley was very friendly with her children, and had a very loving relationship with the Fischer family. A vignette of Seeley with her four kids in a Vunnela, or bathtub, outside in the Fischer's backyard flashed across her mind at one point during this interview.

¹⁶⁸ Seeley to Fischer, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹⁶⁹ Seeley to Fischer, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹⁷⁰ Interviews with Beatrice Fischer.

Unlike a formal psychoanalysis, as well, Seeley's analysis was conducted quite intermittently. Indeed, it could barely qualify as a formal psychoanalysis at all, given that such treatment normally involves daily sessions that go on for years, which allows for the full development and working through of the transference relationship. In the case of Seeley, there are notes recording meetings between Fischer and Seeley only for the months of September 1952 through January 1953. There is a record in one of Martin Fischer's Agenda Books of their having held meetings again in 1959, but there are no notes recording those sessions. Thereafter, the correspondence between them, and the recollections of Beatrice Fischer would suggest that they held irregular meetings in Toronto, and perhaps also during visits to New York, Indianapolis, Los Angeles or other American cities that Seeley lived in over the course of his nomadic lifestyle. Fischer and Seeley also corresponded by mail and over the phone throughout their lives. The following is a letter Seeley wrote to Fischer in 1966 from Los Angeles, which reveals how casual the psychoanalytically oriented exchange between them had become:

Dear Martin,

Had a unique dream – the first one ever about Frank

He was on my back, digging his knuckles most painfully into my spine. I was running, trying to shake him off, and biting his little finger. He dug harder, I bit harder. I had to decide whether to bite as hard as I could. He hurt more, I decided and bit, and bit as hard as I could – down to the bone.

I woke up, not dissatisfied.

Will you interpret? Phone me at home, collect,

Love, Jack¹⁷¹

In addition to this and the other evidence of unorthodoxies in their relationship if considered as a formal psychoanalysis, the physical context in which the "Seeley" file was kept in Martin Fischer's basement is noteworthy. The file marked "Seeley" was quite prominently and accessibly located in a separate filing cabinet from the bulk of Fischer's patient files. Not only was the file set apart in terms of where it was situated amongst Fischer's papers, its contents were also quite unique in many ways. In addition to the notes of their conversations which were often undated, it also included personal letters that John R. Seeley had sent Martin Fischer over the course of many years. In addition, there were letters that John R. Seeley had written to his brother and mother; letters and cards sent by John R. Seeley and his wife Margaret addressed to either or both of Martin and Beatrice Fischer; drafts of

¹⁷¹ Seeley to Fischer, October 10, 1966, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

articles, and even a draft for a preliminary chapter in *Crestwood Heights*; intra-departmental memoranda addressed from Seeley to others including even Aldwyn Stokes; and finally, there were also copies of poems that John R. Seeley had written, some in German. Apparently Martin and Jack would often speak in German together, a further sign of the depths of their intimacy as friends, not as doctor and patient.

Thus, in the strange case of Dr. Fischer and Mr. Seeley there would seem to be a danger that errors of historical interpretation would be quite easy to make. It might be said that Fischer showed lapses in medical judgement over the course of his treatment of Seeley as his patient. I would submit to the contrary that such a pejorative judgement of Fischer's actions would only follow if the very personal relationship between Seeley and Fischer were completely de-contextualized and forced into the highly legalistic and clinical model of contemporary medical psychotherapy. If we consider the deeply personal context of the relationship that developed between Fischer and Seeley; their mutual interests in education and psychoanalysis; their shared experience of isolation as Jews living in a Gentile-dominated society and academic hierarchy; their enjoyment of speaking to each other in German and of socializing with each other's families; then we can quite justifiably conclude that their conversations were *sui generis*. In other words, it was not a medical treatment but rather a psychoanalytic role-play, a confession, or simply one friend helping out the other. Now Seeley may have wanted it to look like he had been in psychoanalysis, but this was part of the general tendency of his personality to spin grandiose tales out of a smidgeon of truth. Indeed, perhaps what Seeley told Fischer in his confessions were exaggerations as well. This possibility must be borne in mind as we enter more deeply into the fantastic tales of Seeley's childhood.

Nevertheless, the collaboration of Fischer and Seeley in work on the frontiers of education and psychoanalysis might also be viewed as creative and bold. Their relationship might be likened to that between Freud and Jung which was so rich in its effects on both men involved and which resonated out in such powerful ways to the larger community. Like their more famous predecessors, Fischer and Seeley played with the boundaries between personal intimacy and professional disinterest, and between the surface cordiality of family life and the darker substratum of their phantasies. They also contended on the question of their loyalties and social obligations as Jew and Gentile. Their cultural contributions extended from such famous literary episodes in Canadian history as *Warrendale* and *Crestwood Heights*, to the laying of important institutional groundwork such as the Art Therapy Institute of Canada and York University. From the perspective of psychoanalytic pedagogy, they can be credited with the first attempt by Canadian educators to

integrate psychoanalysis into their professional development. Yet, according to the Fischer Papers, it all began in the mysterious and tragic circumstances surrounding the death of a baby boy in London, England in 1913 referred to by Seeley as, “the Wolff child”.¹⁷²

4. Origin Story

i) Raised a Cinderella

The date of the first note, which records the content of the Seeley confessions, is September 1st, 1952. Given the nature of their relationship as friends and colleagues, and given the contents of what Fischer recorded Seeley as having said during that session, it is quite clear that this was not their first consultation. Nevertheless, it makes sense in the context of where Seeley was in the process of the Forest Hill Village Project that they might have begun their psychoanalytic experiment in earnest at about this time. Seeley had finished his work in the schools of Forest Hill in the spring of 1952, and was moving into the writing-up phase of the project. An entry in the “Minute Book of the Forest Hill Village Home and School Association, 1949-1953,” dated January 29th, 1952 records that during the winter of 1952 a gift for “Dr. Seeley”, was already being planned:

Mrs. Pearl made the suggestion that the Program Committee set aside a sum of money at the end of the year to help meet the expense of a gift for Dr. Seeley.¹⁷³

The absence of any further mention of Seeley in the Minute Book during the school year of 1952-1953, is further evidence that by this time Seeley had finished his project work in the school.

It was perhaps this transition from the busy, structured workday world to the isolation and high expectations that accompany writing a book that pushed Seeley’s anxiety levels to an extreme, and prompted him to seek out a more serious approach with Fischer. This is borne out in Seeley’s recollections of that time outlined in a letter to Fischer:

Only as we confronted the necessity for publication of the Forest Hill Village Project material did the latent anxiety really break through as the trap closed. To secure admiration generally (and to please my colleagues like Bettelheim and Riesman) nothing but a critical, penetrating, piercing, probing analysis would “do”; nothing else would have reclaimed and sales, and nothing else would therefore furnish on one side what would please them, BUT, on the other what might give me sufficient security (eg. by job-offers) to permit me later to be really independent. As against this the publication

¹⁷² Seeley to his Mother, December 10, 1954, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹⁷³ Minute Book of the Forest Hill Village Home and School Association, 1949 – 1953, January 29th, 1952. Forest Hill Collegiate Library

to the Forest Hill Village people who could and would read it of a critical analysis would threaten my carefully nurtured friendships there.¹⁷⁴

It might also be possible that, in addition to the intensification of his anxiety caused by the pressure to publish, Seeley found that with his work in the schools finished, he had more time to spend on psychoanalytic explorations. In any event, during that first recorded session they reviewed the events, feelings and dreams that had been on Seeley's mind during his vacation the previous week somewhere in Ontario's cottage country. At one point in the stream of consciousness about family quarrels and the relief he found while fishing, Seeley reported that he was "anxious re-work in the fall", and that he had a dream of someone, "fishing up a little book of mine".¹⁷⁵

However, as might be expected, aside from describing his experience of "acute floating anxiety", a central substantive issue which surfaces during the early days of his confessions was the question of his "origins", as he referred to it. A good place to start to look for clues as to the nature of the origin story is in the letters to Frank that were exchanged in 1953, in which Seeley requests that his older brother help him to reconstruct the events of his early childhood:

To me, the main question seems to be to recall the facts of my life and make them intelligible...Mama is the key figure.

You need no longer – for my sake – leave out of discussion any issue, or soften or moderate what you wish to say about it. No knowledge or insight could any longer prove devastating, and it is much more important now to get as much of the truth as soon as possible, than it is to cushion against shock. So feel free to write freely.¹⁷⁶

Frank at this time was living in England with their mother Lilly Seeley. Strangely, this exchange of letters between John and Frank takes place after Fischer's notes come to an end. Yet, these letters make frequent reference to the analysis as having been on-going at least until the fall of 1953 when Seeley moved to Indianapolis. For example, in the following excerpt from a letter written toward the end of the summer of 1953 Seeley writes:

The analysis continues the same – uneven, hard-won gains that cannot be predicted or hurried. My analyst is a God-given fit to my needs, but, sadly, the recipient of all kinds of projected aggression and hostility. To treat anyone so, is about as difficult an aspect of therapy for me to accept as any. The year ahead is going to be anything but easy for any of us.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ Seeley to Fischer, October 25th, 1955, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹⁷⁵ Fischer's Notes, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹⁷⁶ Seeley to his brother Frank, June 7, 1953, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹⁷⁷ Seeley to Frank, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

Given our understanding of the relationship between Seeley and Fischer as informal this unevenness in the documentary evidence is not surprising. Since Fischer's notes make only cryptic references to the origin story however, it is useful to jump back and forth between them and the later letters to Frank, written in more legible prose, to fully introduce the issue. The first reference to the origin story in Fischer's notes comes on the second day of their recorded meetings:

Father's will: left everything to my mother – did she tell him re-me – is story true...
If I were only a girl my father would have loved me.¹⁷⁸

Obviously, we know from this note that Seeley's father died when he was young. In fact, his father Emil Friedeberg died in 1923 at the age of fifty. Seeley would have been only ten years old at the time.

In addition, does Fischer's note suggest that Seeley felt that his father would have preferred a daughter because he already had a son? Perhaps the note implies that there had been a daughter for whom Emil mourned because she died tragically in infancy? At another level, the impression Seeley still had in 1952 that his father, who was quite wealthy, had "left everything to his mother", raises the issue of his mother's trustworthiness. This is because according to a Scotland Yard memo of January 4th, 1932 in regard to Lilly Etta Friedeberg-Seeley's application for naturalization as a British Citizen, it is quite clear that in fact John R. Seeley's father had left him a substantial inheritance:

Applicant follows no occupation. She has a joint account with her eldest son and mother at the Hampstead branch of Westminster Bank Ltd., where at present only a small amount is deposited. Memorialist is in receipt of an annual income of about 500 pounds sterling, from money left by her late husband. Her four children are in receipt of a similar sum, from money left in trust by their father. All the money is invested in British securities. The house where the applicant resides is the property of her children¹⁷⁹

The equivalent today of five hundred pounds sterling in the 1920s would be ninety-five thousand pounds. If we add to that huge pile of money the value of one-quarter ownership in an expensive house in Hampstead, London, we can see more clearly just how much money was at stake.

Moreover, in this Police Memo no distinction is identified between the shares in the inheritance in terms of monies or property in regard to any of the four sons of the marriage. However, it is interesting to note that the mother had set up her bank account jointly only with the eldest son Frank. This certainly fits with John R. Seeley's lifelong feeling that she had unfairly favoured her eldest. In

¹⁷⁸ Fischer's Notes, September 2, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹⁷⁹ Scotland Yard Memo to Home Office, January 4th, 1932. UK National Archives, Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

any event, the question of the trustworthiness of Lilly Friedeberg-Seeley will repeatedly arise in the following discussion of the origin story she told John R. Seeley. This story served as an excuse to disinherit him from entitlements which were obviously his.

In a letter to Frank, dated to Easter Monday, 1953 Seeley makes a more explicit reference to the shocking story of his origin which can serve as a starting off point for a deeper discussion of the issue:

If her origin story is true – as I now assume – her conduct becomes more rather than less monstrous. To protect herself – and Emil – she accepts an infant into her arm, raises it materially and emotionally a Cinderella, and then flings in its face at adolescence a claim to magnanimity and a disinheritance, again emotional and material, that is to be ended in one respect (though not the other) when it has mined its every resource into a career of suitable respectability.¹⁸⁰

From this account we can conclude that as a teenager Seeley was told that the person he thought was his biological mother had really been his own private version of the wicked step-mother made famous in fairy-tales like Cinderella. This had somehow been done primarily to protect Lilly, though also to some extent his father, Emil. If the origin story really follows the pattern of the Cinderella fairy tale, then we might assume that the father had a child by some other woman even after he and Lilly had been married and that Lilly may have felt pressured to adopt the child in order to protect her marital status. This might also have protected Emil's reputation, but then it would not make sense that Emil was unaware of the story. In fact, if this had been the case, Emil would have been the one with a secret, namely, the identity of the real mother of the child, his mistress presumably. However, the Cinderella story would explain the disinheritance of the adopted child once the father was out of the way. In fact, even if the Cinderella story were not true, a wicked and selfish mother might still go so far as to invent such a story in order to justify withholding an inheritance from her least favourite child. With the money she withheld she could certainly afford the legal bills to pay for the document forging that might be necessary to carry off such a plot.

ii) The Family Bible

At this point in the unfolding of the origin story it will be helpful to introduce the main characters in this drama in more detail. The family history of the Friedeberg's and Seeley's of the Hampstead District, London, England is not easily summed up because of its trans-national life-style. However, based on the evidence compiled in the application of Seeley's mother, Lilly Friedeberg-Seeley, to be naturalized along with her four sons as British citizens we can make some initial generalizations. On

¹⁸⁰ Seeley to Frank, April, 1953, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

the basis of the facts of the inheritance and their residence in the exclusive neighbourhood of Hampstead in London we can infer that they were wealthy. This claim is also supported by the frequent travels of the parents to the European and American continents for business and social reasons. As a high school graduate, for example, Lilly Seeley had travelled to New York in 1909 to stay with relatives. She married Emil Friedeberg in London in 1911, and thereafter was also often in a position to travel with him, as is suggested in the following intriguing excerpt from one of John R. Seeley's letters to Frank:

I do not think her behaviour to me (or Cyril, or Teddy, or Pappa – eg. her refusal to follow him to Italy or the Argentine) can be understood except in context with her attempt to destroy you by incorporation; the latter is the ground for which her annihilative activities are the figure and vice versa.¹⁸¹

John R. Seeley's father, Emil Friedeberg, was a manager in London with the major international grain merchant firm Bunge & Co, which suggests a relatively high social status and salary. The reference in the letter to "Cyril and Teddy" is in regard to John's two younger brothers. It should be clarified here that the full name given Seeley at the time of his birth was Herbert John Ronald Friedeberg. It was only after he had immigrated to Canada in 1929 that he dropped the Friedeberg from his name and adopted the name Seeley which was his mother's maiden name. He was the second of four boys born to Emil Emmanuel Friedeberg and Lilly Etta Seeley.

We can say on the basis of the documents submitted to the Home Office as part of the naturalization process, that both families were originally from Prussia in northern Germany, and that they were both of the Jewish religion. In addition to the birth records produced for the Home Office, the German origins of the families was testified to in John R. Seeley's own lingering German accent, and his having been known to speak privately in German to members of the Fischer family. As to their Jewishness, the facts recorded in the naturalization application of Lilly having attended Hampstead Synagogue and her use of the Rabbi there as one of her references for the naturalization application may already be enough proof. Moreover, the name Friedeberg, on John R. Seeley's paternal side, is a common Jewish name, as is Fuerst, the maiden name of his maternal grandmother. Seeley, the maiden name of Lilly Etta Friedeberg, which was adopted by John R. Seeley after Emil's death in 1923, may be an Anglicization of the common German Jewish name Selig. Some controversy did arise, however, during the lengthy naturalization process in regard to the origins of the Seeley-Friedeberg family.

¹⁸¹ Seeley to Frank, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

This process for naturalization was initiated in 1924, but became lengthy because it was delayed time and again for the sake of Lilly's travels on the European continent, "for reasons of health". John R. Seeley's mother did finally succeed in following through on her application none too soon in May of 1932. In the extensive file in the UK National Archives on her naturalization application, the question is raised as to the validity of her claim that, though she and her parents were German-born, her paternal grandfather was born and married in England. This claim is recorded in an internal Home Office memorandum regarding her application:

She stated she was shown in her Identity Book as formerly British, because her paternal Grandfather was born and married in England. She is unable to state the date and place of his birth, but said the record is in an old family Bible.¹⁸²

Just so that the present writer does not feel too alone in his scepticism about the extent to which the truth is being stretched by the Seeleys, it is important to point out that this claim became the subject of some confusion amongst civil servants with the British Home Office at the time. On June 25, 1929 in the minutes of the exchanges between various members of the Home Office, it is suggested that Lilly follow through on her suggestion that the records regarding her grand-parents birthplace are in the Family Bible:

I think that the family Bible records might be consulted by her as to dates and places of her paternal grandfather's and her father's birth's and marriages.¹⁸³

As reported by another member of the Home Office, Lilly responded to the request to produce the Family Bible in the following way:

With regard to the family bible, this is in store with her other effects and she is unable to say which package it is in. Consequently, she is unwilling to go to the expense of having all the packages opened. She has no room for the whole of her furniture at her present address and has no intention of taking it out of storage for the present.

In these circumstances if she is to be allowed to bring her application up to date, it had better be on the assumption that she was not British at birth since there is no certainty as to what might be established by the family bible if produced.¹⁸⁴

This response resulted in the following decision by the Home Office as recorded in the minutes:

¹⁸² Home Office Memorandum re-Lilly Etta Friedeberg Seeley (German), June 19, 1929. UK National Archives, Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

¹⁸³ Home Office Minutes, June 6, 1929. UK National Archives, Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

¹⁸⁴ Home Office Minutes, July 11, 1929 UK National Archives Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

As she describes her parents as Germans, I think that we must treat her as a 10 pound case unless and until she raises a claim to have been British at birth (second generation from abroad) and submits evidence thereof.¹⁸⁵

It was also decided in this exchange to give her the benefit of the doubt in regard to her claims that she intended to reside permanently in Britain, though with some reservations as is revealed in the following sardonic comment with which the minutes end in 1929 in regard to her application, as she is reported to have “gone away”:

Yes, but can we expect anything better from a woman who keeps her family bible in cold storage?¹⁸⁶

Needless to say, evidence from the family bible was never produced. It would seem unlikely after all that a Jewish family would keep a family bible even if the paternal grandparents had resided in England. This humorous, though minor bureaucratic shuffle takes on added significance however, when considered in the context of the larger pattern of obfuscation in Lilly Seeley’s behaviour, and perhaps not coincidentally in that of her second son John R. Seeley.

The misrepresentation in regard to the family bible was not the only one to befuddle Home Office bureaucrats in regard to the facts of Lilly Seeley’s past. There are a string of such changes in her story that are probative as to her general character and may serve to validate John R. Seeley’s feeling about her. These measures went so far that doubt was cast over her general trustworthiness in the eyes of the Civil Servants in the Home Office who processed her application for naturalization:

If this lady is ready to prevaricate when it seems convenient, an assurance from her that she intends to remain here will not be of much value.¹⁸⁷

The measures she took to cover-up her heritage as German and Jewish may also reflect the social pressures of the time in Europe, as did her desire to be naturalized as a British subject, which seemed to take on greater urgency as political events in Germany in the 1930s unfolded. In the words of John R. Seeley himself who as a sixteen year old wrote to the Home Office in support of his mother’s application, she presented herself as more English than the English:

My mother is a thousand times more English, having lived and been educated here since babyhood in the same district, in the same town, than hundreds of people who can call themselves English owing

¹⁸⁵ Home Office Minutes, July 20, 1929. UK National Archives Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

¹⁸⁶ Home Office Minutes, July 22, 1929. UK National Archives Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

¹⁸⁷ Home Office Minutes, June 20, 1929. UK National Archives, Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

to having married Englishmen or through some other fortunate chance --- without their actual feelings or accent having to come up for consideration.¹⁸⁸

Yet, in fact, she was born in Hamburg in 1890. According to her certificate of Release from nationality in Prussia and the German Empire, her first name at birth was spelt “Lilli”, suggesting that the spelling was changed to “Lilly” as part of the overall effort to Anglicize her identity.¹⁸⁹ To her credit she had moved to England at the age of two years old, and as her son suggested was raised in Hampstead, attended the Hampstead Synagogue and went to the Hampstead High School for Girls. Despite the confidence this might have given her regarding her Englishness, she is recorded by the Home Office Minutes as having, “on two or three occasions made misleading statements as to her birthplace to Home Office and Police”.¹⁹⁰ The following statement as to her birthplace recorded in the minutes of 1924, just after the death of her husband Emil in Baden-Baden Germany, was particularly misleading:

This lady is very English in speech and appearance: she has been in U.K. since she was a baby, has never been to Germany, and does not intend ever to go there¹⁹¹

In fact, as it turned out by the time her application for naturalization was finally approved in 1932, she had been prevailed upon by police to tell the truth about her birth in Hamburg and her frequent visits to Germany from the time of her marriage to Emil Friedeberg in 1911 until his death in 1923. However, these apparently minor instances of dishonesty in regard to her birthplace, the family bible and her travels, which may be completely understandable as games that people felt compelled to play when faced with massive, threatening institutions like the British Government, might also carry greater weight in the context of the letters that Lilly Seeley wrote to the Home Office in which she offered excuses for her conduct. Not only this, her letters may also be read as an attempt to cajole the Home Office into expediting her application by using her children, in particular her second son John R. Seeley, as pawns in her game-plan.

¹⁸⁸ Seeley to the Home Office, July 10th, 1929. UK National Archives Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

¹⁸⁹ Certificate of Release, the President of Police, Berlin, October 2, 1925. UK National Archives Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

¹⁹⁰ Metropolitan Police, Scotland House, Memorandum to Home Office, January 4th, 1932 National Archives Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

¹⁹¹ Home Office Minutes, Nov 30, 1925. UK National Archives, Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

iii) The Colonies

At this point we must jump forward in the chronology of John R. Seeley's life from the question of his parentage, to his emigration to Canada in 1929, in order to more fully explore the motivations of Seeley's much maligned mother. In any event, these two key events in Seeley's life, his birth and emigration were in fact deeply intertwined not only symbolically, as a process of resurrection, but also in light of the fact that Seeley first became aware of his mother's origin story at the time of his departure from England for, "the colonies", in late July, 1929. Now, according to Seeley, in interviews with me, he left his family in England in protest against his mother's abusive behaviour towards him which involved abandoning him at boarding schools, hitting him with a whip, and emasculating him through constant undermining comments and criticism. Seeley chose to tell me a story about being asked by his mother to go and pick up anti-constipation medicine for her at the chemist as the incident that finally proved to him that she was crazy. He claimed that it was on the basis of this incident that he decided he needed to run away from home.

They were living at the Tudor Hotel near Lancaster Gate in London at the time, when Lilly demanded of John that he "be careful with the change" when he was sent on his mission. He found this hypocritical in hindsight because she "always spent lavishly". When he returned with the medicine, she held it up to the light and said, "This bottle is a little empty. The chemist is cheating you. You should not have brought home a half empty bottle. Go back". Well, when Seeley went back, the chemist took offence at this suggestion and said that the bottles were sealed by the manufacturers. When Seeley returned again with the same bottle, his mother was livid and raised her voice, "You are taking the word of a tradesman against mine? Go back." Again, he was sent back empty handed by the chemist and at this point his mother went too far according to Seeley saying, "I can still take your trousers down", she said.¹⁹²

However mild this story may seem, in contrast to what might be expected from a story about a wicked stepmother, she certainly does come across as haughty. Seeley told me that he remembers her shouting out from the back seat of her chauffeur driven motor vehicle at some troublesome passerby, "You will hear from our Solicitors"! Seeley claimed further, in our interview, that his mother would not let him enrol at the University of London, "to study economics under Keynes", or to accept scholarship offers to attend Sandhurst Royal Military Academy for Officer Training because either of these courses, but especially his "becoming a common soldier", might have interfered with "Frank's

¹⁹² Interviews with John R. Seeley

chance to become Head of the Foreign Office”.¹⁹³ To favour the eldest son and to hold exceedingly high career expectations for him was bourgeois behaviour on her part to be sure, but was it abuse? In an aside that is relevant here, Seeley also recollects her saying that because of the lowness of his birth, in contrast to that of Frank, he “will have to learn to work with his hands”.¹⁹⁴ Thus, feeling frustrated in his ambitions and unappreciated at home, Seeley began to look for opportunities to break out of his domestic prison. Unlike most adolescent acts of rebellion, however, Seeley was ready to take his quite far.

The next stage in Seeley’s running away from home story is recounted in a Canadian popular history written by Kenneth Bagnell, entitled, *The Little Immigrants*. Seeley features prominently as the culminating story in Bagnell’s book about the up to 100, 000 orphaned English juvenile immigrants who came to Canada at the turn of the twentieth century for an opportunity to belong to a family, be educated, and find employment. Bagnell’s story line, which has seeped into Canadian national mythology, is that Seeley, like so many others of these home children, was exploited as indentured labour and mistreated as a homeless child. However, according to this national myth, through sheer determination and the kindness of strangers, Seeley and many of the other home children managed to redeem their suffering through contributions to Canadian development and culture. Bagnell even goes so far as to suggest that:

In the long history of the movement that brought children to Canada, from its beginning in 1869 to its drawn-out conclusion in the Depression thirties, no episode seemed touched with quite as much consequence as one that began very close to the end of it all...It may well be that no boy in the entire history of child immigration faced the depth of shock that awaited John Seeley in the summer of 1929. He who had been raised, albeit painfully, in surroundings of great wealth was met at the station by a man filthy in dress and habits, and taken to a cabin in the woods.¹⁹⁵

Seeley is cast by Bagnell in the archetypal hero role of a Odin, Buddha, Christ or Socrates who voluntarily walks away from his life of privilege to wander in dangerous places, whether it is forests, deserts, or prisons; and there faces great suffering and temptation but also gains wisdom and returns to teach others the way. This growing in wisdom part of the archetypal hero’s journey is given in Bagnell’s strongest claim as to Seeley’s historical importance:

His name was John R. Seeley; and he was to become, in the eyes of many, the most brilliant sociologist Canada ever produced....he entered classes at the University of Chicago where he finished

¹⁹³ Interviews with John R. Seeley

¹⁹⁴ Seeley to Frank, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

¹⁹⁵ Kenneth Bagnell, *The Little Immigrants*, 250.

his degree in only two years and began a career that was to include the famous study of suburban living based on Toronto's Forest Hill Village, *Crestwood Heights*, the founding of York University (where he was to be assistant to the President and head of sociology) and, in the United States, a term as dean of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions.¹⁹⁶

This is certainly how Seeley would like to be remembered, but is it true or did Seeley play Pansette to Bagnell's role as the credulous historical judge? If we go beyond Seeley's report of the story, which is all that Bagnell relies on, to the historical documents themselves, doubt is certainly cast on Bagnell's romanticized version of Seeley's great wandering. The following excerpt from *The Little Immigrants*, describes the scene of Seeley's departure from England in the following way:

His mother was a woman of personality traits best forgotten, so that his childhood was filled with great affluence and deep deprivation, an experience that would best be described as a gothic tragedy. His father, whom he loved but saw rarely, died very young, when John was only nine, and his remaining years with his mother were such that he withdrew behind the locked doors of his personality, so much so that it was felt he was retarded and suited only to work that would require little intellect. When he was fourteen, a very lonely, unhappy boy, he began to imagine that if he could only become a child of Dr. Barnardo's Homes, he would find the combination of personal freedom and emotional security for which he desperately longed. Every-time he heard mention of the name Barnardo, or read of another shipload of boys heading to Canada, he dreamt of the life they were surely enjoying. But then, one day when he had just turned fifteen, he set out walking through a London Street and caught sight of a poster that was to lead him to Canada on his own. The poster showed a smiling youth, stripped to the waist, astride a load of hay, and beneath, in large letters, the words, "Come to Canada, Be Your Own Boss at 21". The attraction of that promise was irresistible to Seeley. He went to Canada House, where a clerk told him that his passage would be paid, in steerage of course, provided that he accepted the farm job given him – which he knew from the shiny poster to be a ripe, golden opportunity – and stayed with farming for four years. Within a few weeks he had parted company with his mother forever, trying as much as he could to put the past behind him, and that August he landed in Quebec, not as others did, with a group of similar children destined for a common experience, but by himself, alone and penniless. He was put on a train and sent to a farm in Lorneville, Ontario, a community not far from the town of Lindsay.¹⁹⁷

According to Lilly Seeley's letters to the Home Office, however, the situation was not at all one of voluntary and heroic escape from abuse as her son later claimed; but rather that she had herself sent him to "the colonies" rather than allow him to return to Germany to be with his father's family. Moreover, unlike the myth of the home children in the Canadian historical imagination, John R. Seeley was by no means a waif struggling to survive on the streets of London. He was in fact a privileged child who very well may have been banished by his family because he was so much trouble, or sent away to work in "the colonies" to protect him from a much worse fate in Germany.

¹⁹⁶ Kenneth Bagnell, *The Little Immigrants*, 250.

¹⁹⁷ Kenneth Bagnell, *The Little Immigrants*, 100.

If this were the case, the reader is still left with the question as to why Lilly Seeley felt compelled to send her second son John away from home. The implication of the felt danger on Seeley's mother's part that he might join his father's family in Germany is that the adolescent Seeley was threatening to leave home and his mother was trying to find a way to allow this to happen as safely as possible, or at least in a manner that was commensurate with her own interests in completing her application for naturalization.

There was one other alternative that Seeley and his mother had hoped for as a solution to their problem. This was that he would be admitted to the British Armed Forces, but this had been made impossible because neither of his parents were naturalized British Citizens. Lilly Seeley wrote to the Home Office with reference to her son John's applications for admission to the British Armed Forces in the following manner:

I might add that the latter has tried unsuccessfully to enter the army and the Air Force lately, and this owing to the fact that his remaining parent is un-naturalized; and I am therefore obliged to send him to the Colonies rather than let him go to his late Father's relatives abroad.¹⁹⁸

It appears that Seeley's claim that he had once been offered a scholarship to Sandhurst Military Academy may have been a further example of exaggeration on Seeley's part as there is no record of such included in the file. There is, however, a letter from the Air Ministry rejecting Seeley's application for the "Aircraft Apprentices, Royal Air Force, Limited Competition, June 1929", on the grounds that "candidates must be not only British subjects, but sons of natural born or naturalized British subjects".¹⁹⁹ In a precociously worded letter of his own to the Home Office pinning his hopes for entry in the Air Force on the success of his mother's naturalization application, the young John R. Seeley makes no mention of any scholarship, which one might think it would have been to his advantage to do. Instead, Seeley, the youngster, pleads in surprisingly familial tones of his own great promise:

If you could possibly manage to see your way to help us promptly, not only would the privilege of naturalization be acclaimed with utmost joy by my Mother and her little family, but I personally should be able once more to apply for entry to one of His Majesty's Forces, and I am convinced I should do very well, for my School Record is A1, I am physically fit as a fiddle, and have always been so, unlike the other boys, and my brains though I say this myself, are well above the average having passed the College of Preceptors Exam in the Senior Grade at the age of fourteen.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁸ Lilly Seeley to the Home Office, June 21, 1929, UK National Archives Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

¹⁹⁹ Norman Ward to Seeley, Air Ministry, Whitehall, April 8th, 1929. UK National Archives, Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

²⁰⁰ Seeley to the Home Office, July 10th, 1929. UK National Archives Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

Even if there had been any scholarship otherwise offered by Sandhurst Royal Military Academy, it would seem unlikely that his mother would have interfered with his collecting it. Indeed, if we are to believe her letters she was quite hopeful that she could avoid his going to “the Colonies” in favour of a military career. Just days before he was scheduled to depart in July of 1929 for Canada, Lilly Seeley wrote the Home Office begging them to expedite her papers so she could cancel his trip:

Sir,

Further to your letter of the 15th, inst. I beg to state that my trustees are buying for me no. 109 Canfield Gardens, Hampstead, a house in the same street in which I lived for seventeen years, and which I now intend to make my permanent domicile.

I hope that this will further strengthen my case and that you will be able to let me know something definite before the end of next week as my Son is due to sail on the 27th with the Megantic, and I should then be able to cancel his sailing instructions....”²⁰¹

iv) Emil Emmanuel Friedeberg

In order to go a little deeper into exploring Lilly’s possible reasons for sending John R. Seeley to Canada, it is necessary at this point to say a little more about her late husband, and John R. Seeley’s ostensible father, Emil Emanuel Friedeberg. He was born in Stettin, Germany in 1873, but only resided in Germany till his eighteenth year when he moved to Argentina. In our interviews, John R. Seeley said that his father’s family estate was as large as a Los Angeles city block. His father had boastfully told his second son that an army is run on grain, and that his family business had supplied Napoleon’s armies. This is quite believable because his father, who as we have already indicated had become London manager for the huge international grain merchants Bunge & Co. in 1909, was himself accused of being a major wartime grain supplier during World War I. Unfortunately, as a German national, the British government suspected him of being involved in the supply of grain to Kaiser Willhelm’s armies and he was interned from 1915 to 1918, before being repatriated to Germany at the end of the war and, “returning again to London in November, 1919”. This despite his wife’s claims that he had “stuck to his guns”, presumably in the face of British governmental wartime trade restrictions, and “until the English Government itself took over the importation of grain to this country, held himself bound to do his utmost to continue the work, which he knew he was best able to perform”.²⁰² It is unlikely that Emil Friedeberg was as loyal to the British Crown’s interests in carrying out his business duties on behalf of Bunge & Co as is suggested by his wife. In fact, these

²⁰¹ Lilly Friedeberg-Seeley to the Home Office, July 19th, 1929. UK National Archives Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

²⁰² Lilly Etta Friedeberg-Seeley to the Home Office, August 2, 1929. UK National Archives Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

German grain merchants controlled 23% of the total Argentine Grain Export Trade during the Great War. Moreover, as the war progressed Bunge & Co's shipments to neutral continental countries like Holland and Denmark increased exponentially and it was likely that these increased supplies of grain were destined for Germany.²⁰³ If armies do run on grain, as Emil Friedeberg told his son, it was understandable that the British government had concerns in regard to his activities on behalf of Bunge & Company.

We have now witnessed another level of duplicity in the Friedeberg-Seeley family history in the possibility of the father's treasonous business dealings. However, to return to the question of whether Lilly actually wanted to prevent her son from going to Canada, there is one other revealing passage in her letters to the Home Office which we can now consider, knowing what we do about the father's past:

I may add that it is doubly important and necessary for me to keep my boys together and in England, to avoid all chances now and in the future, of a difference in ideals and ideas ever arising between each other, or between them and me, for no one, perhaps, has appreciated in all its bitterness, as I have, the misery – mental and moral – that can be brought about in the most united of relations, given a touchstone such as the Great War, and circumstances such as prevailed in my late husband's family, where each brother lived in another country long years, and considered that country where his children were born as his! If I have to send one of my boys away, be it even to a British Dominion what absolute guarantee can I have that he stay there – and once home influence and home ties grow weaker, how can I be assured that his relatives on his Father's side, with whom I have almost entirely broken (the Grandparents having died years ago) may not approach him? ²⁰⁴

Is this the heartfelt sentiment of a mother to “keep my boys together and in England”? A woman who, we might note, has been forced to raise four sons without a father because of his internment; who was “without nationality” after being de-naturalized from Germany; and who finally lost her husband forever when she was only thirty – three? Or, was this a ploy to use the circumstances of her unhappy son's demands to leave home to her advantage by making it sound as though the British Empire might suffer by his flight, but gain from her naturalization. She also tugged at the heart strings with her plea that her “little family” might be torn apart by his having to leave. After all, the assumption of her claim that she would have to send him to Canada to stop him from going to Germany was that he had to go somewhere. Why? If his older brother Frank could stay with her, why couldn't John? Perhaps he had to go somewhere because she couldn't stand him in the first

²⁰³ Roger Gravil, “The Anglo-Argentine Connection and the War of 1914-1918”, *Journal of Latin American Studies*, (Vol 9, No. 1, May 1977), 63-64.

²⁰⁴ Lilly Friedeberg-Seeley to the Home Office, August 2, 1929 UK National Archives Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

place, not because of his rebellious demands. This theory is supported in Fischer's notes where Seeley is recorded as having said: "M – threw me out of England".²⁰⁵ Perhaps, the real story here is that John R. Seeley was just too much like his mother. It is already possible to detect in the letters to the Home Office a similar inclination for rather tendentious communication. Sometimes, for reasons such as this, parents grow to hate their own children. Such a normal antipathy toward her equally querulous, deceptive, and independent second son may be all we need to know to explain the origin story. The very origin story, moreover, that had the added advantage of providing a pretext for withholding a substantial inheritance from her second son, and keeping it for her own use.

At least the fact of John R. Seeley's voyage to Canada with no more than a single pound note in his pocket, according to the records of his passage aboard the SS Calgaric which arrived in Halifax on August 10th, 1929, seems to suggest that her motives in the letters to the Home Office begging for help in preventing his journey did not originate in concern for her son. If she had really loved him and wanted to keep him with her and the other boys, she would not have followed through once she realized her game of bluff with the Home Office had not worked. Moreover, she would not have sent him off with the cruel revelation that he was not her legitimate son, as if to say, "Go. You are nothing to me anyway". The poor boy had already only recently lost his father.

In order to leave open a crack of doubt in regard to her maliciousness, however, is it possible that when he left it was she who felt betrayed and therefore stabbed back with the origin story and a refusal to give him any money? As has already been suggested, she may have been forced to support the Canada option because of her fears for his safety in Germany, and the failure of the naturalization process to meet his impervious schedule. She lashed out with the origin story, because she was so hurt. But then why did she never retract it, even when he came back to visit her in Hampstead years later toward the end of World War II? On the other hand, perhaps the origin story was true. If that were the case, out of sympathy, she did not have to tell him at that moment, or ever at all. Perhaps she never would have told Seeley the truth had she not felt so betrayed by his running away. Is it possible that at some deep level she loved him even though he was not really her son?

v) The Wolff Child

This leads us back to the origin story in regard to which we can now look at a few other pieces of evidence that may be important. In a letter to Martin Fischer dated December 12th, 1954 John R.

²⁰⁵ Fischer's Notes, October 10th, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

Seeley introduced the most revealing piece of evidence on the origin story in an attached letter to his mother:

My dear Martin,

I thought you might be interested in the attached letter to my beloved mother. It is in reply to one written to me in spite of my request that she do not write, asking what had become of her precious \$700. I recognize her claims, but for the first time in my life I make some claims of my own. We have come a long way I think....²⁰⁶

The letter reassures his mother that he will pay back the money she loaned him in Seeley's typically abstract fashion: "...let me assure you that no right that you have will be violated by me".²⁰⁷ It is interesting that, like many disgruntled heirs, he was still willing to take money from this most hated of mothers. Yet, the letter then turns to what is for him the main issue, especially if he is to lay claim to further financial benefits:

You told me a story of my origin (in 1929) which in my naivete and fear I accepted and upon which I further accepted your view of your own magnanimity and my claimlessness vis-à-vis the family, both financial and affectional. May I now know – in order to assess what claims I have: a) whether there is anywhere any shred of evidence for the account b) if so, may I see it, or copies of it c) whether a burial certificate is available for the alleged Wolff child d) whether Pappa, if he was told, and if he believed it uttered any views as to how the matter should be handled, particularly as to the continued recognition of me as his son, with all the implicit claims for equality and justice that he, as a just man would take that to connote.²⁰⁸

First, on the basis of this letter, it must be asked whether Seeley's interest in the validity of Lilly's origin story was really for the sake of psychoanalytic truth in regard to early trauma, or whether he just wanted to establish his financial claims in regard to the estate of his wealthy Hampstead family. Bearing this in mind, however, the traumatic nature of the origin story both in terms of its possible effect on Seeley as a baby and its more demonstrable effect on him as a rebellious teenager becomes clearer. In some sense, it now can be established that, at least according to Lilly whom we already know is given to falsifications, John R. Seeley was not the biological child of either his father, who may not even have known about his origin, or of his mother, who claims to have accepted him out of magnanimity. The curious reference to the burial certificate of the "Wolff child" suggests that John R. Seeley was in some way a changeling.

²⁰⁶ Seeley to Fischer, December 12, 1954, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²⁰⁷ Seeley to his Mother, December 10, 1954, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²⁰⁸ Seeley to his Mother December 10, 1954, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

If we set aside the supernatural (though John R. Seeley was so elfin in stature and appearance that the possibility that he was really the child of elves who had been substituted for a human baby is tempting), it may be possible that a child born to Lilly Seeley did not survive. To cover-up the shame of this aborted, sick or still – born child, or possibly even to cover-up the guilt in regard to a crime of infanticide, Lilly substituted another child for her own dead baby. We might imagine that the mother of the Wolff child, who had wanted to arrange to give the baby up for adoption, agreed to Lilly's assumption of the financial responsibility for forging documents, and of course to her adoption of the child. Lilly's claim to magnanimity was based on the fact that she took on this other child who, though likely also Jewish given the fact that Wolff was a common Jewish name, it would appear was from a family of lower social status to that of the Friedeberg's. Another possibility may have been that Seeley's father Emil had a child out of wedlock, or that someone in his family had done so, and in order to cover this up, Lilly had agreed to adopt the child as her own. In this case, the burial certificate of the "alleged Wolff child" would have been forged to protect the reputation of the real mother and to ensure that Herbert John Ronald Friedeberg would never be mistaken for someone else's child.

In either case, these implications of the origin story, assuming it has some validity, might explain a number of odd aspects of Seeley's childhood. For example, it would explain why in his letter to the Home Office he was able to claim perfect health, "unlike the other boys". According to Lilly's letters to the Home Office in which she attempted to explain her absences from England during the process of her application for naturalization, the other boys were riddled with ill-health from childhood. As had been the case with their father, their illnesses had required frequent visits to Europe for operations and recuperations:

I was obliged to proceed to the South of France with my mother and my eldest son, also my third son, in account of their health We were unable to return until August of last year for my son was in a nursing home, after suffering a most serious operation, and the best part of eighteen months his life was in very great danger. My third son, after an operation the same year was also unable to return to the rigours of an English winter, and for the first time in his life, at the age of thirteen years is now able to attend a day school.²⁰⁹

Assumedly, she kept her first and third born sons at home with her while they were being raised because of their ill health. John R. Seeley, being in good health, was able to attend boarding schools

²⁰⁹ Lilly Friedeberg-Seeley to the Home Office, May 21, 1929. UK National Archives Kew, Surrey (HO 334/128/1141)

in Heidelberg and Henfield away from home. In Fischer's notes Seeley is recorded as referring to the difference in appearance between himself and his brother Frank as confirmation of the origin story:

Large Belly – repulsive – Franks's pot belly from earliest times
Smooth absence of genitals
My father was also stout the same
General confirmation²¹⁰

In fact, Seeley was skinny as a rail. His wife complained that he didn't eat regularly. But he was healthy. He lived to be 95 years old. Perhaps the dead child for whom John R. had been substituted was of ill-health like the others, and that was why it died not long after being born. There is in fact a discrepancy in the timing of the birth records for "Herbert John Ronald Friedeberg" according to the General Register Office for England and Wales which might suggest that there were complications around the registration of his birth. The birth of his elder brother Frank, whose birth certificate says he was born on January 17th 1912, was recorded in the General Register Office as might be expected in March of the January-February-March Quarter of Registration. However, in John's case, the birth certificate produced by his mother for the Home Office in 1932, says that his birthday was February 21st, 1913. However, his birth is not recorded until June of the April-May-June Quarter of Registration with the General Register Office for England and Wales.²¹¹ Why the extended delay?

While the origin story may have simply been the sad story of John R. Seeley being adopted as a replacement for the loss of a sick baby who died at birth; or the more scandalous story of his being adopted in order to protect his father's reputation, the way that John talks about it in his letters to Frank, and in Fischer's notes, suggests that there may have been something more sinister at work. First of all, if she had adopted him as a replacement baby, why would that cause her to be so hateful toward him, to the point of physical abuse? On the other hand, if the child were the love child of one of Emil's mistresses, then Lilly's resentment would be quite a bit more understandable. Possibly a woman might resent the burden of raising an adopted child if she had only done it to cover-up a perceived failure on her part to bear a healthy baby, or to protect a sick baby, or if something went wrong that might have been preventable at the time of the birth of her second child. But then there are references to the origin story that make it sound like John R's perception of the story was that Lilly did something awful, rather than just human. In the letter to Frank in which Seeley tells about his terror upon hearing the story, he adds that:

²¹⁰ Fischer's Notes, October 7th, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²¹¹ Records of the General Register Office for England and Wales, UK National Archives, Kew, Surrey, Ancestry.ca, September 4, 2007

I was angry because you defend Mama, or at least push the claim of “context” and, therefore, in effect, plead mitigating, if not exculpating circumstance....

When in 1929 Mamma told me in the way she did – in hate and anger and intent to do maximum damage of my origin....she opened up floodgates of terror and hate beyond my capacity to manage...

I swore accordingly (all this in the first few months of 1929) that I would do everything possible to ensure that such a thing could never happen again. That gave me a program: a) to understand what had happened b) to help others to ‘understand’ c) to fight conditions of inequity, ignorance, or cruelty ie. to learn, teach, to fight.²¹²

Here Seeley traces his career long dedication to working on the problem of child abuse to the event of his being told the origin story. Such a level of anger would imply some form of child abuse being present in the origin story, and again, it may have been of an unspeakable character, because though the story is discussed often, its contents are never clearly revealed. In the letters to Frank and especially in a later letter to Fischer, Seeley makes vague references to his mother’s behaviour being excusable because it was caused by some form of illness. In the same undated letter to Frank quoted above, in the context of expressing his frustration that his mother might be excused for her behaviour in any way, Seeley writes:

... the behaviour of others was naturally caused, blamefree and, at worst, mistaken.²¹³

The question of whether she was blamefree, or might plead exculpating circumstance seems to imply that she might otherwise be charged with having committed some kind of crime as her part in the origin story. The implication that perhaps the exculpatory circumstance may have been related to some form of mental illness comes into focus through later references by Seeley and family members to his mother’s life. In a letter to Fischer written in the early 1970s, Seeley laments that the continued issues in his relations to his wife might be traced back to his problems with his mother, whom he now identifies as having been sick in some way:

As I look back my mother’s beatings were trivial – other beatings didn’t bother me deeply at all. But the endless accusations, the constant teaching that I was no good; that those who loved me were simply “taken in”, “fooled” that I didn’t know what they said or thought in private, that I was bad or incompetent and doomed and hopeless – that was what all but destroyed me. And then I didn’t know that my mother was sick. I took all this for real. I confirmed her prophecies and was punished and self-tortured accordingly.²¹⁴

²¹² Seeley to Frank, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²¹³ Seeley to Frank, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²¹⁴ Seeley to Fischer, Undated (sometime around 1970), Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

In what way was she sick? In the obituary written for John R. Seeley in the *Globe and Mail* based on interviews with family and friends, it is claimed that she “may have been mentally ill”.²¹⁵ Given all the other evidence of her having physically abused Seeley as a boy, and having abandoned him to boarding schools; and also the evidence of her own lies to the police during the naturalization process; and finally of her also having secretively substituted one child for another; it would seem that some form of mental illness might be suspected, but of what kind? Of course any of a number of possibilities could explain a mental illness that might cause the “quintessent crime” of infanticide which we are suggesting may have been perpetrated by Lilly Etta Friedeberg Seeley. In one of his dark poems about his mother written during the fall of his psychoanalytic explorations with Dr. Fischer in 1952, Seeley uses the phrase “quintessent crime” in the context of making allusion to the possibility that his mother may have been guilty of some form of infanticide:

For pure she was with a purity lewd and burning
 A purity fetched of the cesspool and got of the slime
 Fetid, corrupt and corrupting, purist of poison
 Quintessent crime

How shall I sing of her now who made song songless
 Who strangled at birth the unlaughed laugh with the unsung song²¹⁶

Is Seeley referring here to the murder of the child for whom he served as a replacement according to the origin story, or is he referring to his own fate in a metaphorical sense? Perhaps, these poems only reflect Seeley’s own feeling that from the very earliest memories of childhood, his mother did not love him. The poems might be read to reflect his feelings that she was dead to him from the beginning, and thus that he in turn felt strangled of all life force from the beginning. Indeed, in the two other suggestive, though short and cryptic, references to the origin story in Fischer’s notes, Seeley reveals how far back his feeling of disconnectedness from his mother went:

Sept 5th, 1952

The thought she was not really my M – my stepmother – stolen me – present immeasurable times...

²¹⁵ Sandra Martin, ““Obituary”: John Seeley, 94, Sociologist and Psychoanalyst”, *The Globe and Mail*, January 26th, 2008

²¹⁶ John R Seeley, “A Poem for Mothers Day”, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

Sept 9th, 1952

Memory – looked in mirror do I look Jewish do I look like my M – Am I her child – recurrent theme – seems to go back and back – I knew she was Jewish. I couldn't be her child...²¹⁷

These seemingly genuine recollections might either be read to verify the origin story, or as the ideational images of the depth of Seeley's feelings of alienation from his mother. The reference in the first passage to Seeley's feelings that his mother had "stolen" him is particularly thought provoking. Why would she steal a child but to replace one that she had lost? Yet, why would she come to hate the replacement child? It would have to be because the child reminded her of her loss and of her guilt.

In the end, Seeley himself accepted the truth of the origin story as he admitted in one of his letters to Frank:

Thanks for the enquiry on "origin" and the report of it. Here Mamma's casualness in my mind adds to the plausibility of the story. Unless she is tired or now indifferent, I should have expected a spirited defense of an untrue story. Actually, now, I would prefer to have it so. I do not think it exculpates her one whit – in fact, to me, it makes many things more heinous; but it does add to intelligibility.²¹⁸

To proceed further, then, with the possibility that there was some truth to the origin story, it is interesting to note the recurrence of references to infanticide in Seeley's imaginative life. In particular, the image of being "strangled at birth" is used repeatedly by Seeley. For example, in the following passage from Fischer's notes, Seeley's recalls that his mother Lilly said that she should have strangled him at birth:

You should have been strangled in your cradle
Feeling she actually tried to choke me
Not being able to say anything
She did gag me by god
She tied a washing flannel in my mouth
I am sure – she rolled it up and pushed it in my mouth till I gagged then she tied something around my head – most awful feeling of it being forced back into my mouth till I gagged²¹⁹

Is it possible that Lilly fell into a severe post-partum depression or psychosis, which pushed her over the edge from an abusive mother to a murderess who suffocated the Wolff child? According to the

²¹⁷ Fischer's Notes, Sept 5 and 9, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²¹⁸ Seeley to Frank, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²¹⁹ Fischer's Notes, September 10th, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

psychiatric literature this would be the most likely explanation for infanticide in Lilly's circumstances, given the range of mental illnesses that might have been the cause. But such an event seems to describe a rather singular and physiologically caused event, rather than a continuing pattern of sickness or mental illness, as Seeley suggested was the case with his mother.

Of course, it is impossible to know with any certainty what may have happened to the Wolff child. Perhaps, he was merely a projection of Seeley's own darker instincts. Perhaps, the Wolff child was really a metaphor for the wolf within Seeley himself that crept into high places in the social hierarchy by stealth and pounced on opportunities that presented themselves with predatory determination. Perhaps Seeley projected what he hated most about himself onto that other of himself, lost to history, whose identity he kept secret from the world. After all, John R. Seeley obviously knew who the Wolff child was supposed to be, and therefore who he really was.

vi) Munchausen Syndrome

There is one form of mental illness which it is tempting to read into the circumstances of Lilly Friedeberg-Seeley's parenting style. What if Lilly Friedeberg's imposture of motherhood hid an inner core of unconscious murderous impulses toward her children? Perhaps the frequent travel for the sake of the ill health of her children; the operations that kept her out of the country and interrupted her applications for naturalization in 1924, 1929 and 1932; the death of her second son and replacement by the changeling Wolff child; the mysterious drowning of her third son Cyril as a young teenager; and last, but not least, the evidence of tendencies toward child abuse, were all part of a larger pattern of inducing illness in her children, commonly known as Munchausen Syndrome. Multiple terminations of pregnancies and the death of children are frequently associated with woman suffering from this syndrome. In addition, we have already seen a pattern of deviousness and lies in Lilly Etta Friedeberg-Seeley's behaviour which are the means by which the Munchausen mother operates. Add to this list the loneliness and depression of a woman whose husband's work frequently took him away from home, and the constellation of contributing factors to a case of Munchausen Syndrome becomes complete. In fact, not only did Emil's work keep him away from home for most of the year, it also led to his internment for over four years in British Prisoner of War Camps. Indeed, the life of the historical Baron Von Munchausen himself, after whom the syndrome is named, seems quite familiar in the context of the Friedeberg-Seeley family history. Like them, he was a Prussian aristocrat born near Hamburg Germany who traveled far and wide. And, like them he suffered from *pseudologia phantastica*, or the practice of spinning grandiose tales out of a smidgeon of truth.

It is mainly in his poems that Seeley alludes to the murder of a child in a way that conjures images that appear consistent with a theory of Munchausen Syndrome. As has already been suggested, one imagines at first that the poetic images of infanticide stand for his own experience of loss in relation to his mother, as if he may as well have been dead to her, or she to him. However, the student of John R. Seeley's biography is as haunted by the Wolff child as he was himself, and this leads us to wonder whether the poetry hides a more monstrous reality. The following is an excerpt from a poem entitled "I tire":

that which is dead, and here, and unbegotten
 I know not how –
 Unburied, unbothered, past over, to come and instant
 Riddle anew?²²⁰

Again in a poem entitled, "Sit Shiva", Seeley uses the image of the murdered child, and here it is a girl. Is it possible that the murdered child was a girl and that is why Seeley said, "If only I were a girl my father would have loved me"? One might even guess that the fact that the child was a girl might have stoked the Oedipal jealousies of the already disturbed parent to the breaking point. The other three boys all happened to have survived their birth:

Wail, oh my voice, though she be torn, I tearing
 The long-wove thread from my life's tangled web
 Rend oh my parents, rent beyond repairing
 As she is dead

Dead, dead to me and mine forever and forever
 Outcast, accursed, unmade, unborn, undone
 Erased from out our knowing or caring
 Ne'er been but gone...²²¹

The most suggestive lines in reference to the "quintessent crime" however are written in German in the following stanza. Seeley may have used German when there was something he wanted to say that needed to be further encrypted than usual:

In dein auge sel nur blitzen
 In dein herzen find nur wirth
 Dein gesich nur besitzen
 Hass und auf dein hande blut

²²⁰ John R. Seeley, "I Tire", Undated poem, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²²¹ John R Seeley, "Sit Shiva", Undated Poem, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

This may be translated roughly as follows:

Your heart is like stone
 I am not one of yours
 See it in your eyes
 Just hate on your face
 And blood on your hands²²²

As we shall see more fully in the next chapter, it is clear that Lilly Seeley was guilty of child abuse. Whether that extended to some degree of Munchausen Syndrome as might be read into the above poetic images we may never know. It is significant however that we know something about the specific nature of the relationship between John R. Seeley and his mother because of the insight this gives us into his career. At one level, the origin story casts a certain accent on the grandiosity of Seeley's vision as Director of the Forest Hill Village Project. We can see more clearly how important it would have been for a man who felt very deeply that he was a nobody to compensate with such dramatic gestures of personal mission. Moreover, if the implication of the origin story was that at the core of his personality Seeley really did not know who he was this would explain his tendency toward imposturous conduct. For example, his taking credit during the Forest Hill Village Project for having completed his doctorate when in fact he did not. Perhaps it was the *pseudologia phantastica* that he either inherited or learned from his mother, or step-mother, that was in play in such exaggerations of the truth.

5. Projected Hostility

i) Mengele

As we have already seen in Seeley's letters to Fischer, he often struggled with controlling the latent anger that he understandably harboured because of the difficulties of his childhood. Indeed, it may have been that in his crusade for children's mental health Seeley was fighting back against the angry thoughts that troubled him. But there may also be broader issues at stake in the story of John R. Seeley's struggle with his anger than an explanation of his own career path. There is the question of the significance of his personality in relation to the institutional and intellectual power structures that he worked in and criticized. In this chapter we will study Seeley's personal struggles with anger and deception as a basis for understanding his penetrating critique of power in the field of the social sciences, and his successes and failures as a civil servant.

²²² Seeley, Un-titled Poem, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²²² Seeley, Untitled Poem, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

Foucault has suggested that schools and hospitals only masquerade as helping professions when in fact their function is more analogous to that of a prison. “Is it surprising” he asks at the end of the chapter of *Discipline and Punish* devoted to the discussion of Bentham’s Panopticon, “that prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons?”²²³ The modern prison according to Foucault has lost none of the qualities of the medieval torture chamber, only rather than seeking to control its inmates by physical violence, it has re-directed the sadistic instincts of the prison guard and executioner into the invisible realm of psychological intimidation. Indeed, in a recent book of popular psychology entitled, *Snakes in Suits*, renowned experts Paul Babiak and Robert Hare make the case that the particular skills of today’s psychopath are rewarded in the corporate structures of modern society.²²⁴ Is it possible that behind the smiling face of the Doctor or the Principal there sometimes hides the snake-like desire to measure the length of its prey before it swallows him whole into the depths of its system? Seeley certainly thought so. Indeed, the best part of his contribution toward the writing of *Crestwood Heights* was his critique of the potential for the abuse of power by the expert practitioner in the fields of psychoanalysis, psychotherapy and teaching:

In the psychological fields it is not unlikely that the knowledge of how to heal may also lead readily into the knowledge of how to destroy.²²⁵

The point of Seeley’s penetrating critique of the element of power that may be at work in some seemingly therapeutic relationships was of course to prevent this potential for abuse. As we have seen he had great faith that the integration of therapeutic approaches in education could help to revolutionize society. However, the depth of his analysis of this problem suggests that he brought to it more than a merely intellectual understanding:

In some cases the patent enjoyment of what would otherwise be thought of as an uncomfortable situation and the near total-unconsciousness of what is being done, hint that some deep-seated need of the expert is indeed being satisfied. The lack of distress in mining the gold of guild in his audience and dredging advantage from its dependency, the uninhibited satisfaction of his own needs for exploit and for exploitation, suggest the building of bastions by the expert against some felt inner passive dependency.²²⁶

²²³ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 228.

²²⁴ Paul Babiak and Robert Hare, *Snakes in Suits: When Psychopaths Go To Work* (New York: Harper Collins, 2006)

²²⁵ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights: A Study of the Culture of Suburban Life* (New York: Basic Books, 1956), 417-418.

²²⁶ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 366.

The reader of these passages wonders if Seeley was not describing his own experiences in his work with Fischer or in the classroom. In another passage Seeley goes so far as to use the term sadism with reference to the possibility that someone entrusted with guiding a class might abuse his powers:

It was hoped, further, that the same “professionally specialized person” might be able to conduct “Human Relations Classes” in the schools, and that, if properly trained he would safeguard the process against the perversion to sadistic uses of which it is clearly capable.²²⁷

Indeed, we have seen this type in action over and over again in recent times from Doctor Mengele’s hygienic operating tables at Auschwitz, to the deliberately sparse rooms and empty shelves of Mother Teresa’s orphanages. Josef Mengele is a particularly compelling prototype of the sadistic doctor in the modern historical imagination. In Robert J. Lifton’s study of Mengele entitled, *The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide*, he argues that the lively behaviour of Mengele at Auschwitz points to the enjoyment of the exercise of power as the defining characteristic of the sadistic personality. In the following passage from Lifton’s book a dramatic instance of Mengele’s sadistic play is recounted by a survivor:

An example of what she called Mengele’s “diabolic” attitude was his appearing on a Jewish holiday and announcing, “This is Tishahb’av [the commemoration of the destruction of the First and Second Temples]. We will have a concert”. There was a concert, a roll call, and then an enormous selection, causing her to ask bitterly, “Why should we listen to music while we are being cremated”? She stressed that Mengele’s behaviour was carefully planned: “He must have written it down: music, sit down, Zahlappell [roll call], crematorium”. All this was part of his “sadistic play” she believed because “every step Mengele took was a psychological basis for torture”. And compared with other SS doctors, Mengele was “more sadistic, more raffiniert [sophisticated, tricky, sly]. He was more elaborated because he must have known psychology”.²²⁸

It is interesting to note that this Holocaust survivor’s account associated the particular effectiveness of Mengele’s torture with his expertise in psychology. It was precisely this that Seeley feared. He was aware of the increasing likelihood that persons like Mengele would re-appear as the development of social technology advances. Indeed, as Director of the Forest Hill Village Project, a massive social engineering venture in its own right, Seeley may have been concerned that he might himself become responsible for setting up opportunities for such a monster to operate. We may even wonder if in his work to prevent such abuses of power by experts, Seeley was not also concerned about himself. He may have been concerned that his own anger issues would spill out into the classroom. This is indeed something that all teachers must be aware of. To his credit, Seeley can claim to be the first teacher in

²²⁷ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 427.

²²⁸ Robert J. Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide* (New York, Basic Books, 1988), 102.

Ontario's history to address this problem by integrating a process of psychoanalytic self-reflection into his professional development.

Of course, Seeley was not Mengele and Forest Hill was not Auschwitz. There was no sadism, murder or genocide involved in the Forest Hill Village Project. Yet the idyllic contrast of life in Forest Hill to the frozen wastelands of the eastern front seems almost too diametrical to be merely coincidence. Perhaps if we stop for a brief look at what happened in the short period between Auschwitz and the Forest Hill Village Project, as it affected John R. Seeley in particular, we might get a better sense of why he was so concerned about the powers of the expert.

It is a curious fact that the two men who exercised the most professional influence on Seeley's educational experiments have been charged with punitive tendencies in their practice. It is even more curious that these men, Dr Bruno Bettelheim, founder and Director of the Orthogenic School at the U of C, and Fischer in his role as psychiatric advisor to the Warrendale residential treatment center for troubled youth in the Toronto area, were both Holocaust survivors. The concentration camps of Nazi Germany might very well serve as the ultimate model and proof of modern tendencies toward the panopticon, but it is obviously not fair to say that either Bettelheim or Fischer intended their schools to repeat those horrors. To the contrary, they sought to undo and prevent such trauma in order to redeem their personal suffering. Nevertheless, it was Bettelheim himself who wrote that the inmate in a concentration camp internalizes the methods of the guards even against his own will as a means of survival. The irony that the Orthogenic School and Warrendale had the same effects in reverse, so to speak, though never to any extreme comparable to the concentration camps, may prove that he was more right than he wanted to be. Indeed, both schools were comprised of controlled, vulnerable populations whose treatment involved the controversial use of force as part of a new experimental science designed to liberate them.

The practise of physical punishment applied by Doctor Bettelheim at the Orthogenic School became a matter of some debate late in his career amongst those who were at the school as social workers and students. In a biography written about Bettelheim entitled, *Bruno Bettelheim: The Other Side of Madness*, author Nina Sutton reported the recollections of students at the Orthogenic School about the harshness of their father figure:

"Bert Cohler clearly remembers the slap he got from Dr. Bettelheim one day when he returned from class with an excellent grade for a German essay. I had heard the anecdote mentioned in a radio programme as an example of Bettelheim's sadism, shortly after his death, by one of Cohler's former

dorm-mates. The story sounded so unbelievable that I felt certain there had to be some mistake, some malice or some distorted memory somewhere. But when I asked him about it, Bert Cohler burst out laughing. “Dr.B knew exactly what he was doing; in my essay I attacked Arthur Schnitzler. And I knew Schnitzler was one of his favourite authors”! So the story was true!²²⁹

Seeley would later fall out with his mentor Doctor Bruno Bettelheim over the latter’s insistence that corporal punishment was necessary in order for the neurotic child to be relieved of the guilt over his trespasses.

The Warrendale educational experiment included the application of “holding” techniques for students in crisis that could be interpreted as the use of excessive force by the social workers involved. In fact, when one watches the demonstration of the “holding” technique in the film by Alan King, the audience is taken aback by the seeming enthusiasm with which the social workers supervised by Fischer pin down and physically immobilize the children under their care, all the while screaming at the children to express their feelings freely. Indeed, even the reaction of an audience of psychiatrists to whom the film was shown at an academic conference, attended also by John R. Seeley by the way, was one of alarm at the aggression displayed in the application of the “holding technique”.

....It is worth describing an earlier screening of a rough cut of the film, moderated by Dr. Martin Fischer, Psychiatric Consultant to Warrendale. This was at an International Conference of Child Psychiatrists and Child Care Workers. We screened a three hour version and Martin did a question and answer session for about an hour afterward. The psychiatrists were enraged, especially by the “holding” sessions, and their questions reflected this.

After each explosion or question Martin would nod sagely and then nod again for the next question, as any good analyst would do. About twenty minutes into the string of tirades, there was an explosion from the childcare workers and nurses sitting, in equal numbers, behind the doctors. “What do you folks know? You see kids an hour a week! We work with them all day every day of the week and we have never seen anything before as amazing and helpful to us!” They explained why – holding was an especially useful notion, so were the routines around meals and bedtime, the rocking and affection expressed. Martin had hardly to say a word. It was almost as if he were working with the children, Carol and Tony, as he did in a scene in the film: letting them make the discoveries they needed to make for themselves; having earned them, they owned them.²³⁰

Sadly then, it would appear that the punitive undercurrents in the practises of Bettelheim and Fischer may have been rooted in the trauma of the Holocaust. Despite their superhuman efforts to reverse the effects of the horror they went through as European Jews, they perhaps did not entirely succeed in re-channeling their anger and resentment into their creative work as educators. To some extent it spilled

²²⁹ Nina Sutton, *Bruno Bettelheim: The Other Side of Madness* (London: Duckworth Press, 1995), 339.

²³⁰ <http://browndalestaffkids.multiply.com/notes>, *Browndale Staff and Kids*, Allan King, Film-Maker, 17/06/2006 11:31:00 AM

over in the form of what appeared as nothing more than a minor slap, or hold. In this sense, as one who himself suffered from the climate of anti-Semitism in Europe during his childhood, it may be fair to say that Seeley feared the reflection of the Nazi concentration camp guards in himself and his mentors when he observed the potential for exploitive and even destructive activity on the part of the expert. The reasons Seeley had such insight into the potential for a pathological reversal of the intent of the Forest Hill Village Project from mental health to exploitation, will become clearer after we next consider in more detail the evidence of Seeley's own struggles with his mental health.

ii) Punishment

Given the nature of the trauma that John R. Seeley endured as a child, it is not surprising that he developed personal problems. In order to better comprehend his problems, namely his struggle to control his tendencies toward anger and self-deception, we must go back to these experiences in anguish and sympathy. Then we may be ready to take a more balanced view of their repercussions in Seeley's adult personality. The notes of his confessions to Dr. Fischer dispel any doubts as to the reality of Seeley's mother's physical and emotional abuse. On September 4th, 1952, we get a vivid description how he felt as a child when his mother punished him:

Alone – safe – threatening noise of Mother rushing up in anger, for the punishment or yelling – feeling of cowering, trying to cover my face with my arms, gradually being driven into a corner where you couldn't defend yourself any longer – too much of you to cover – she could hit you on exposed parts – knuckles or back of hand, white skin, very striking the blue veins – black and blue bruises on my hip – denying she made it – I remember her saying I make you black and blue all over – I wallop you till you can't sit down. Remember getting hungrier and hungrier in bed.²³¹

The insight into the child's fear and vulnerability in this situation is genuine and moving. In that same session, the scenes of abuse become more graphic and disturbing:

My lips feel she jammed a spoon between my lips and teeth into my mouth by sheer force – picture of corsets with stiff whalebones, whipping me with a piece of whalebone out of these corsets.²³²

This image of being whipped with whalebones grips the readers mind instantaneously, perhaps because it evokes the contrast between the size and power of the adult in contrast to the smallness of the vulnerable child. At one point in his confessions, Seeley recalls that she threatened to kill him. Understandably, this passage suggests that he phantasized about murdering his mother in retaliation:

²³¹ Fischer's Notes September 4th, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²³² Fischer's Notes September 4th, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

“you will kill me yet bring me to an early grave” - vivid picture of her being in the cemetery under the prom – if I only could – feeling in my hand as though I was preparing to choke her to death – reverse feeling I heard her say I strangle you
 You should have been strangled in your cradle
 Feeling she actually tried to choke me
 Not being able to say anything
 She did gag me by god
 She tied a washing flannel in my mouth
 I am sure – she rolled it up and pushed it in my mouth till I gagged then she tied something around my head – most awful feeling it being forced back into my mouth till I gagged –²³³

One other image of cruelty described in this early session can be associated with Seeley’s later disinterest in eating, and his wife’s concern about his diet:

Another time she covered my Porridge with Salt – she made me eat it till I vomited.²³⁴

These scenes elicit our sympathy for Seeley’s vulnerability as a child to his mother’s cruelty; however, we might also consider the objection raised by Frank in his letter to John R. Seeley that the latter failed to remember the kindness their mother had showed him. After all, she was his mother, or was she? This was Seeley’s response:

Not balanced? I remember she once showed concern and wrapped me in a warm Turkish towel when I had a bellyache. And once she melted, and kissed me as I pled and apologized. And what else? Oh yes, one pound or five pounds – to leave England with, because the law required it, and even that she threatened to withhold²³⁵

As further evidence of the emotional abuse suffered by Seeley which seems to have been even more traumatic than the beatings, there is the fact that his mother abandoned him at Henfield Grammar School, the small public school he attended in the South of England, now called the Lucton School. She left him there for four years after his father died. She only visited him once during that time. If this does not add circumstantial evidence of a lack of attachment to her son John, then one might also consider the callousness of her having informed him of his father’s death in Baden-Baden by letter. He had been sent to a British Public School in Heidelberg, Germany in 1923 near where his father was being treated for his final illness. Seeley spent the year after his father’s death with his mother and brothers before being sent to Henfield.

²³³ Fischers’ Notes, September 10, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill Ontario

²³⁴ Fischer’s Notes September 4th, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²³⁵ Seeley to Frank April, 1953, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

It is no wonder given the distance John R. Seeley experienced between himself and his parents that he showed a flatness of emotion in writing or talking about these events. I borrow the phrase “flatness of emotion” from a passage in Fischer’s notes where Seeley himself questioned his own sense of detachment:

Thought I was being crowded by my own conflicting feelings – aware of the clock ticking should be attending to business – How flat my emotional expressions are....²³⁶

As part of this numbing process which sets in when faced with too much emotional pain, the way that Seeley must have displaced his emotion about the death of his father is captured in the following moving scene he describes in a short “Educational Autobiography” he submitted for his course work at U of C in 1940:

The year was 1923, the year of the greatest and worst inflation. Men fought in the streets. Women wept. Children died. The French invaded the Ruhr. They saw fit to bring in colored troops. There were the usual rapes, the usual atrocities. A proud people writhed in the agony of its humiliation.

In the classroom we had Diktat, Geshichte, Handschriftsubungen. I don’t remember a detail we learned. But there remains with me a sense, almost a physical feeling, of Germany’s darkest hour. The school matron told me what had happened in her home town. She wept and though boys don’t cry, I wept with her.²³⁷

One can easily imagine the German matron with whom he wept as a substitute for his missing mother, and the sadness for Germany as standing in for his feeling about the loss of his father. The Fatherland here becomes the father, and this transference was obviously not unique to John R. Seeley at this time.

v) Pederasty

He was eleven or twelve years old when his father died. Then, as already related, Seeley was:

... sent off to a poor, hence cheap, boarding –school in the English countryside.²³⁸

On the one hand, it was a relief for John R. Seeley to be away from his mother, and to find a substitute father figure in the headmaster Edwin C. Churcher, “By direction and indirection he

²³⁶ Fischers Notes, October 7th, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²³⁷ John R. Seeley, “Educational Autobiography”, Term Paper Submitted at the University of Chicago, 1952, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

²³⁸ John R. Seeley, “Strange Journey”, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

became my earthly father”.²³⁹ The hint at indirection Seeley drops here for his naïve audience of geriatric church goers in Los Angeles in the early twenty-first century may have been an allusion to the darker side of his experience nearly a century before at Henfield. The memories he shared with his audience, however, formed a nostalgic reverie of his early indoctrination in the Church of England under the “booming voice” of the Headmaster father-figure. It was there at Henfield that Seeley learned all of the Anglican hymns and prayers, to which he makes constant reference throughout his career, dating back to the 1559 Elizabethan Prayer Book:

My inner life was largely a life of song. “Abide with me, fast falls the eventide....when other helpers fail and comfort flee....oh, abide with me”.²⁴⁰

In his love of song we can see that Seeley was too hard on himself when he suggested that he showed a “flatness of emotion”. It seems that the sweeter emotions in Seeley were expressed in a kind of internal musical play that he enjoyed. At least in hymns like *Abide with Me* he could phantasize about the sense of attachment he was never allowed to enjoy with his parents. In these contradictions we seem to experience the fragmentation of the psyche under the stress of experience, the way that the individual is “torn to bits” by history as Foucault observed.

Now Henfield, “near the beautiful South Downs in sea-washed Sussex”, held its dangers for the young Seeley. A second teacher father-figure had who “been sent down from Oxford” took an interest in Seeley. Seeley went so far as to inform me in our interviews that he had “been involved in child abuse” in his relationship with this man. The official story of their relationship is portrayed by Seeley in his “Educational Autobiography”:

In the second year I had the good fortune to be in the class of a man to whom the intellectual life was important. He seemed to us a tyrant; his standards were unreasonably high and unconscionably strict – by our measure....He taught me the whole of Euclid in his own spare time and mine. We did it in less than one term, and started on analytic geometry. At the end of the term he left. I don’t even remember his name. I remember his manner, his clarity of reasoning, his insistence on accuracy, his contempt for the sloppy, his love of learning. These things abide.²⁴¹

One raises eyebrows in reaction to the references to this man’s meticulousness and contempt. It is also sad that again someone John R. Seeley admired had left him. In the penultimate and undated

²³⁹ John R. Seeley, “Strange Journey”, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

²⁴⁰ John R. Seeley, “Strange Journey”, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

²⁴¹ John R. Seeley, “Educational Autobiography”, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

note recorded by Fischer sometime in January of 1953, Seeley described the sexual abuse at Henfield which he was too young to understand:

Master who used to sweat and perspire so
 Some uneasy feelings of masters and boys
 Sexual dangers
 Potential dangers of seduction
 Arm on shoulder
 Touched you
 Here knee
 How much to be seen obliquely up trouser leg
 Unlimited food – quid pro quo
 Fully obsessed man sitting there
 Handsome young boy standing there
 Mr. P. AS - Picture of Prisoner labouring what a pity he is theirs – will he come back? Never!
 Didn't know what it was all about....²⁴²

This scene of sexual bullying calls to mind his mother's punishments. "I can still pull your trousers down", he remembered her saying. Thus, it must have been hard for Seeley to be trusting in intimate relationships because in his experience this might lead to danger. We are drawn back by these memories of Henfield to a reflection on Seeley's anger issues. No one could emerge from such experiences without a great deal of anger, especially towards persons in authority.

vi) Whip

Seeley often spoke to me of the "fury" that he displaced from his mother onto Fischer during their psychoanalytic experiment. We can see the degree of anger he vented at Fischer in the following excerpt from Fischer's notes:

I hate you – immediate contraction in hands and body – one thing I hate – writing down what I say...
 E.C.T. – punishment²⁴³

The fear Seeley had of the control that the psychological expert can exert over others was obviously not just academic. He experienced it as something real in his relationship with Fischer. He associated the psychoanalytic note-pad with the more painful and violent electro-convulsive treatment which was used far more often by psychiatrists in his time. Indeed, perhaps Seeley was aware that Fischer had used electro-convulsive treatment with some of his other patients.

²⁴² Fischer's Notes, January 1953, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²⁴³ Fischer's Notes, Oct 3rd, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

Seeley's anger also got directed out at others and in Fischer's notes we get some sense of this experience as well. For example, he would talk to Fischer about his frustrations in his relationships at work during the time that he was serving as Director of the Forest Hill Village Project. In the following passage, for example, he describes the mental imagery that would accompany these work-related angry spells:

I know I feel angry
To hell with him
Give him Dave Riesman's letter
Nothing is going to happen
Black object, black foxtail, black peddle
Distasteful picture of myself with whip in hand.²⁴⁴

The appearance of the image of a whip in the context of such angry feelings may be interpreted as a memory trace of his mother's whippings. But now, in a kind of revenge phantasy, the whip is in Seeley's hands. The whip image recurs frequently in Seeley's confessions to Fischer. In the following passage, Seeley attempts to give his own psychoanalytic interpretation of the symbolism of the whip:

Penis potential weapon to get back at the world
Bullwhip – Beet – deep red color.²⁴⁵

Again, the image of the whip recurs in the context of a description to Fischer of a difficult transition from a relaxing lunch with his family to going back to work. The reader even detects a note of humour in the description:

Extraordinarily happy lunch – Margaret and kids life of the partyish not so much fun for a year or two – on my way over – whipping boy – could carry on happily if only I had someone to hit.²⁴⁶

Despite the joking sense here, the recurring image of the whip is at first sight hard to reconcile with Seeley's activism on the issue of corporal punishment. This contradiction may be viewed as further evidence of Seeley's tendencies toward imposture. Yet, it is most likely that the disturbance of his consciousness by violent imagery made Seeley particularly sensitive to the continued use of "the strap" in Ontario schools in the 1950s.

²⁴⁴ Fischer's Notes, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²⁴⁵ Fischer's Notes, October 3rd, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²⁴⁶ Fischer's Notes, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

It is important to point out here that Seeley's did not just direct his anger outwardly. He also directed it at himself as we see in his frequent expressions of feelings of self-reproach. He remarked to Fischer on, "how widely read I am and yet how confused". He even went so far as to say, "I wish I'd never been born". When Fischer tried to point out his progress, Seeley was quick to put a negative spin on it, "feeling of resentment of your saying my anxiety is down". Indeed, Seeley's anger and his intense anxiety seemed to be closely related. The following, quite dramatic passage, may give us a clue as to the meaning of this when viewed in the context of his experience as an orphan, "... a little money in the pocket, the terror of an empty pocket".²⁴⁷ This passage may show the sense in which his feelings of powerlessness as a boy cut off from his family had never left him. They remained constantly with him in the form of a chronic sense of dread and anxiety, "the terror of an empty pocket". The solution, of course was to seek power, represented here by, "a little money in the pocket". Such power could be gained in financial form, or in the form of something more structural, like a job. This may help to explain Seeley's aggressiveness in his working relations with colleagues, and also why he had a tendency to take this too far.

In the following passage from Fischer's notes, Seeley's anger and anxiety at work as the Forest Hill Village project reached its climax are accompanied by a different kind of imagery. In this case, it is the historical context of the Cold War that finds its way into his associations:

Work – 12 o'clock meeting – Don Graham, Bill Line, Griffin, anxious not to eat with them – a give away – they would high pressure me into taking over lectures for teachers – by then I had diarrhea – persistent moderate discomfort – not able to disentangle myself from the project - Don's affection claims – group pressure – I shall find a sociologist – office statistics – profound doubts re contacts doubts re process - priest – communist interrogations – Iron box – spy hole – peep hole for you – Dremicur business – 2 smart young jews – generalized invitation aggression/oppression invitation in search of object – I really am bothered about the process - Push your face – don't want to listen what you say – makes me more anxious – cover your mouth – push those words back ...

Wouldn't it be wonderful if I could be simply and directly angry with you instead of circumstantively...²⁴⁸

We hear Seeley in this passage associating his feeling of being trapped in his responsibilities at work with imagery of Fischer acting in the role of a communist spy. Yet, at the end of it all he recognized that all these thoughts were transferential; that he was perhaps angry with Fischer because of the power he held over him, but that there was no reason why he could not say these things more, "directly". In this moment we see the nature of the psychoanalytic cure at work.

²⁴⁷ Fischer's Notes, November 7th, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²⁴⁸ Fischer's Notes, October 28th, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

Indeed, in later letters written by Seeley and his wife Margaret there are signs that Seeley had made progress in his relationship with Fischer toward learning how to better cope with his anger issues. At one point Margaret wrote to Fischer confirming that, “Jack is more considerate of me than he was before”.²⁴⁹ Seeley summed up his progress in another letter he sent to Fischer sometime in the late sixties or early seventies. In this letter he traces his work on psychoanalytic self-reflection back to the time of the Forest Hill Village Project:

From thirty-nine years of age to fifty(!) I tried with help to take myself apart and put myself together again, more realistically, modestly and safely while still trying to be an adequate husband, father and worker, scientist and teacher. I did my best though I lived most of the time in panic. My wife helped as much as she could by being loving, patient and taking on more responsibilities than she should have had to. By age fifty I was once again reasonably operable without constant therapy, less improperly dependent on my wife, freer with my kids, easier with equals...²⁵⁰

6. Non-Jewish Jew

i) A Yiddishe Kopf

Another important way in which Seeley could be accused of imposture was in his efforts to hide his Jewish identity. For example, he might have kept the Friedeberg in his name as had his mother, and his brother Frank, who until their deaths both hyphenated their last names as Friedeberg-Seeley. On the one hand, it is understandable that he would adopt the name John R. Seeley instead of keeping his birth name of Herbert John Ronald Friedeberg given the confusion over the circumstances of his birth. Although, on this point, it may be considered strange that he kept the name of his mother, whom he so detested. It should be noted here that he also changed his first name when he came to Canada. As an adult he was referred to as Jack by his friends, which was a nickname he adopted because that was how they first referred to him on the farm in Lorneville where he spent his first winter in Canada. On the other hand, dropping the Friedeberg from his name enabled Seeley to pose as a man of English and Anglican cultural heritage which was certain to make life far easier for him in English Canada. Indeed, this was how he presented himself to me and others, including many of his Jewish friends.

In fact, Seeley never disclosed his Jewish heritage to anyone but his friend Martin Fischer until the time of his death. Beatrice Fischer, with whom he was also quite close, never knew of it until our

²⁴⁹ Margaret to Fischer, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²⁵⁰ Seeley to Fischer, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

discovery of the “Seeley” file. She told me that in fact she had always joked with him that he had a “Yiddishe Kopf”, a Jewish sensibility.²⁵¹ She said that he always laughed these comments off. Now, it would not be fair to say that Seeley’s Christianity was not entirely imposture in the sense that this is a matter of individual choice, but when considered in the context of his denial and subterfuge in regard to his Jewish origins, it may be looked at that way. No doubt, Seeley’s immersion in the Christian faith had become quite deep while he was a student at Henfield in the 1920s. He also returned to a very active participation in the Christian church in Los Angeles when he was elderly. There was also a period in which as a young adult exploring psychoanalysis and sociology, he returned to his mother’s sort of “fashionable atheism”. This may have been socially preferable to Lilly than to remain actively Jewish as she had been during her childhood in London. For her son, John R. Seeley, the atheistic period in his life coincided with his work on the Forest Hill Village Project and his confessions to Martin Fischer. At this time, he also explored with Martin Fischer his feelings about his Judaic origins.

ii) Letters to Frank

The Jewish question may have become a focus of concern during his confessions because Fischer wanted his friend to return to the fold of the Jewish community. This is suggested by the determination with which Seeley questioned his brother Frank about their Jewish heritage in his letters:

....can I call on you for help once again. As I foresaw – or rather forefelt – the whole question of Jewish-ness is of immense significance and peculiar difficulty. Memories literal and symbolic in very nearly all other areas of life crowd close and return vivid and easy – even down to the recapture and re-enactment of attendant bodily phenomena eg. the squirming muscles under mama’s “dutiful whipping”; the persistent pain of a torn eye-lid corner from a misplaced slap, even the peculiar sensations in the lip from a kiss refused.

But on matters Jewish, there are hints, vague feelings, a sense of clear and terror-laden secrecy and little else. The conscious fragments pieced together make a story which both my analyst and I feel implausible and improbable. The effect in this and only in this area is more like dissociation than repression.²⁵²

Again there is an implied mystery in the story of Seeley’s Jewish heritage that is surrounded by “terror-laden secrecy”, much as the origin story had been. One wonders if the expectation from a psychoanalytic perspective was that some long-lost memory of childhood trauma would reveal itself in this area. If this is true, then it might also be questioned as to whether or not the urgency with

²⁵¹ Interview with Beatrice Fischer, 10 April 2008

²⁵² Seeley to Frank, January 5th, 1953, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

which the Jewish question is pursued by Jack in his letters to Frank was not in part motivated by Fischer's speculations. This is suggested in the letter where Seeley says that Fischer is not convinced by the implausible surface story in regard to the family's Jewish heritage. But what sinister plot might Fischer have been looking for? The letters suggest that while Seeley had been aware of the family's Jewish heritage while he was growing up, this had been another aspect of his identity which his mother had made an attempt to suppress. Fischer may have surmised that rather than a voluntary and collective family decision to let their Jewish heritage drop, there was an active plot on the mother's part to suppress any signs of Jewish heritage, perhaps in opposition to the desires of her in-laws whom, as we have already seen, she had broken with after her husband's death. Even further, the conspiracy may have been suspected by Fischer and Seeley to have gone so far as an attempt to cover over this heritage through an active, though insincere, conversion to Christianity. It may be important to recall in this context that Fischer had proudly defended his Jewish heritage even in the face of physical torture, internment, and the more subtle forms of anti-semitism he found in Toronto. Seeley's adoption of a conspiracy theory in regard to the family's suppressed heritage is implied in the barrage of questions he fires at his brother:

...What was Grandma's open position? What was her hidden agenda? What was Mama's...Where did Grandpa go in a topper – or did he – on Sunday mornings? What was on Finchley road near mama's bank and on the same side, but closer to the metro station that I could have understood to be Grandpa's church or Papa's? What motivated the episode in which Grandma came to the Abbey Road R. C. Church near Kilburn and sat still and disapproving all through the mass? What does it tell us about her relation to mama in this matter? Why on earth did Mama keep her promise about your learning Hebrew – the real reason – not the romantic one about keeping faith with her pledge? How did other members of the family, Friedeberg's and Fuerst's view this de-judaization and what efforts did they make to save us? Why was I not confirmed at Henfield – it would have been natural – and what did Mama explain to Mr. Churcher? How did we know enough to use German words and avoid Yiddish ones in Grandma's mixed vocabulary?²⁵³

If we judge by the letter addressed to "My dear 'Jack'", the response from his brother Frank was that the Fischer-Seeley conspiracy theory was an over-reaction in regard to the heritage issue.

Unfortunately, Frank's full response can only be guessed at, as only the first page of the letter was kept in the "Seeley" file. Nevertheless, his generally condescending attitude of scepticism regarding his younger brother's histrionics comes through quite clearly:

I am glad to see from your letter that you seem so much calmer, so that I feel less qualms about starting to write on the issues you raise than I should have done before, though I still feel that you

²⁵³ Seeley to Frank. January 5th, 1953, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

over-rate your intentions to have them dealt with realistically, and under-rate the emotional impact which some of the things I write are likely to have on you.²⁵⁴

In regard to Seeley's question about the location of a Synagogue near his "mama's" bank, Frank goes on to write:

I don't think there has ever been a synagogue there or near.

In regard to Seeley's question about the destination of his grandpa on Sunday morning's in his "topper", Frank responds non-plussed, and perhaps with a note of irony:

Sunday morning would suggest the zoo, of which Max was a fellow, rather than the synagogue.²⁵⁵

Though Frank manages to cast aside his brothers concerns about the Fischer-Seeley de-judaization conspiracy theory in this manner, there are signs in Fischer's notes that Seeley's concerns about his Jewish heritage were genuine and legitimate. For example, in the first mention of the issue in the notes on September 11th, 1952, Seeley seems to suggest that his Jewish heritage was associated in his mind with feelings of inadequacy:

Remember asking my grandmother – what are the little tubes on doorstops – also in garden – one locked cupboard in it – I somehow got it opened pots and pans and dishes – she praised me "you are a smart boy" – these were his grandma's kosher cooking dishes – yet I feel not many were used – not quite sure of herself – clear picture of glans of a penis – someone pointing toward my penis – and exploring it gentle, softly – small – this is a sign you are jewish....²⁵⁶

This theme of inadequacy recurs again in a most dramatic way in a meeting between Fischer and Seeley held later that week in which Seeley recollects his experiences in Heidelberg in 1923 during the year of his father's final illness. In his conversations with Fischer, Seeley reveals the confusion that was caused in him by the lack of direction in regard to heritage from his family:

Frightened by violence in school and town – obscure threats I didn't understand – sobbing and terror – young jewish boy – in group – I have feeling of betraying him by saying I wasn't – jumble of images weapons boys hands – story rather slight – boy beaten by teacher – Austrian boy and episode that led up to beating – Heidelberg – bundle most of his clothes pawn brokers to sell – Hope he would be beaten – shared these feelings – don't know why – some grudging admiration for not telling whom

²⁵⁴ Frank to Seeley. July 28th 1953, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²⁵⁵ Frank to Seeley, July 28th, 1953, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²⁵⁶ Fischer's Notes September 11th 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

he owed money to – is this or that person jewish – extremely threatening to be identified as such – my protection “of course he is not” – “do you believe in jesus” comes to my mind – were you baptized – are you baptized?²⁵⁷

Seeley here expresses his shame at his own cowardice in not admitting to his Jewish identity because of what he could plainly see were the dangers at the time of doing so. In a later session, the traumatic scenes he witnessed at Heidelberg are described in more detail:

One wire ball – weapon at Heidelberg – Nazi’s beating Jews on their genitals – undressing them in the streets – toilets examining them²⁵⁸

Perhaps this sense of risk in revealing his Jewish identity remained with him his whole life and that is why he always avoided the topic. But what about Fischer, given what he went through because of his Judaism, wouldn’t he have been disgusted by Seeley’s imposture as a Christian? How could he respect Seeley, knowing in such depth about his friend’s betrayal of the religion to which he was so attached? Might it be possible that at some unconscious counter-transferential level, Fischer actually admired Seeley precisely because he had been able to throw off the yoke of his religious identity. Fischer would have been spared much suffering in his life if he had had the same luck or moral flexibility as Seeley. He might never have been separated from his “selige Mutter” if he and the rest of his family had not been persecuted because they were Jewish. Fischer records Seeley as putting this point quite nicely in his own words:

Anti-Fischer – anti-semitic
I smart enough to conceal it²⁵⁹

In fact, in another surprising moment in his confessions Seeley goes so far as to reveal his own tendencies toward anti-semitism. As part of a stream of freely associated thoughts Seeley reports:

Anti-Semitic thought – Another young Jew²⁶⁰

This may indicate that not only did Seeley seek to conceal his Jewish identity, but that at some level he actually resented it. Or, it may be that he really did not think of himself as Jewish at all. Indeed, if we take the “Wolff Story” seriously it is quite possible that in fact Seeley was not Jewish! Perhaps that is how Seeley rationalized his lifelong concealment of his Jewish heritage. It also conveniently

²⁵⁷ Fischer’s Notes, September 16th, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²⁵⁸ Fischer’s Notes, October 10th, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²⁵⁹ Fischer’s Notes, November 13th, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

²⁶⁰ Fischer’s Notes, November 7th, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

provided him the opportunity to join in with the Gentile majority and scorn, “another young Jew”; as if to say, “you know, there are too many of them around here”.

As one further illustration of Seeley’s efforts to conceal his Jewish heritage, we should consider the episode of Frank’s visit to Toronto. Seeley feared that the obvious fact that Frank was Jewish might give him away and estrange him from his superiors at work. Was there any reason that as the Director of the Forest Hill Village Project Seeley might have become particularly afraid that his Jewish heritage would be exposed? If we re-call the facts that Stokes was viewed by Fischer to be anti-semitic, and also that the leaders of the Canadian National Committee on Mental Health held eugenicist ideologies, this is not surprising. Moreover, if we recall that at that time there was still an unofficial quota of Jews allowed in the Psychiatric Department of the Medical Faculty at U of T, then such concern on the part of Seeley may have actually been wise:

Park Plaza Hotel – Frank stayed there –
Get rid of him, get him into the Hotel
Hospital Xmas party – afraid re – him
Jewish looking?
My brother?
What will he do to my status and relations²⁶¹

But had Seeley entirely succeeded in concealing his Jewish Identity? His “Yiddishe Kopf”, as Beatrice Fischer put it, seemed to reveal itself again and again, especially during the period of the Forest Hill Village Project. As substitute father figures, Seeley had moved from Bruno Bettelheim and David Riesman at the U of C, to Martin Fischer in Toronto. He seemed to seek out the company of other Jewish intellectuals. The students with whom he was to become identified in Toronto namely, Rick Salutin and Clayton Ruby were also Jewish. In fact, Forest Hill Village was by the 1950s emerging as a largely Jewish neighbourhood. More than half of the students who were involved in the Forest Hill Village Project were Jewish. And yet, for all they knew, Seeley was not Jewish. Certainly it would seem that most people who knew Seeley in his Toronto days did not even question his ostensibly Anglo-Saxon heritage. Or did they? Was his falling out with the medical elite at the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital influenced by the gradual recognition of his Jewishness despite his attempts to conceal it? Had Seeley’s friendship with Martin Fischer; his determination to identify himself with psychoanalysis; and his failure to hob-knob with jocular ease amongst the Badminton and Raquet Club set in Toronto, led to suspicions about his “Yiddishe Kopf”?

²⁶¹ Fischer’s Notes, October 6th, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

Part III

The Unpublished Version of Crestwood Heights

I think Seeley's style is somewhat Chestertonian, paradoxical, and provocative...

Aldwyn Stokes

1. The Historiography of *Crestwood Heights*

i) Repressive Hypothesis

While it is true that from the perspective of a strict interpretation of the boundaries of historiography, no attempt has been made until now to give a thick historical description of the Forest Hill Village Project; it might, on the other hand, be possible to re-think Seeley's magnum opus, *Crestwood Heights*, as just such an attempt. Strewn amidst the amateur sociological reportage of the book, *Crestwood Heights* does leave us with a historical picture of the events of the Forest Hill Village Project. However, their significance gets lost in the jargon-laden writing style so typical of pop sociology, and in the general absence of historical method on the part of the authors. This latter point was noticed in the introduction to the book by John R Seeley's sociological mentor from U of C, David Riesman:

... one of the problems of the book as a research document is its lack of comparative material. For there are things about *Crestwood Heights* which may be somewhat differentiating.²⁶²

In making what amounts to a historical critique here, even Riesman himself, as the author of *The Lonely Crowd* which was the most famous pop sociology of its time, stays within the social science discourse that was *de rigueur* in the early post-war period. The use of the terms "comparative" and "differentiating" assumes that there may be geographically determined distinctions between societies, but overlooks the possibility of temporal dynamics. This framework allows for the satisfaction of the sociological impulse to identify more or less permanent social classification schemes, which might not be as plausible if historical change were taken into account. However far the boundaries of sociological and historical literature have since merged in the post-modern era, *Crestwood Heights* itself was written very much in the modernist sociological spirit of the Chicago school that had been attended by its authors. If this desire to transcend historical limitations in pursuit of fixed categories

²⁶² Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, p xi.

of social knowledge is not already revealed in the adoption of the pseudonym for the title of the book; the following paragraph from its first page, written by Seeley himself, might help to further prove the point:

The book attempts to pin down in time and space this thing of dreams for the many, and actual experience for the very few. One such community from among many of its kind have been chosen. It will be called “Crestwoods Heights”. It is “somewhere in central Canada”: the time falls in the years immediately following World War II.²⁶³

Nevertheless, it is important to flesh out, analyze and supplement the actual history of the Forest Hill Village Project which lies hidden amidst the jargon of *Crestwood Heights*, not only because of the failures of the original text as history, but also because of the success of the work in history.

Crestwood Heights has taken on an iconic status alongside other famous pop sociologies of the early post-war period, which is often referred to just as “the fifties”. For example, in an article entitled, *The 1950s: Gender and Some Social Science*, Wini Breines, lists David Riesman’s *The Lonely Crowd* (1950), John R. Seeley’s, *Crestwood Heights* (1956) and William H. Whyte, Jr’s, *The Organization Man* (1956), as:

...classics of 1950s social science that had a major impact on social thought. Repeatedly referenced, they introduced new ways of understanding what was happening in the postwar period. This work left a lasting imprint because it helped to shape the terms of discourse about American society, not only in the 1950s but for decades to come.²⁶⁴

Crestwood Heights also wins accolades in Scott Donaldson’s acclaimed study of the 1950s entitled, *The Suburban Myth*, where it is identified as having emerged in the literature concerning the nature of post-war suburbia as “normative or typical”. Donaldson also compliments Seeley’s *Crestwood Heights* alongside Whyte’s *The Organization Man* as “what remain two of the most professional and thorough investigations” of suburbia.²⁶⁵

According to Breines, the influential picture created by these authors of the post-war period in North America suggests that there was a tension at the time between a prevailing desire for respite from the insecurities of wartime, and a countervailing anxiety in regard to the potentially panoptic powers of the new social control technologies. On the one hand, Breines sees a conservatism in the perspective of these classic texts that reinforced the post-war tendency to idealize the stabilizing role of the father,

²⁶³ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 3.

²⁶⁴ Wini Breines, “Gender and Some Social Science” (*Sociological Inquiry*, Vol 56, Issue 1, January 1986), 70.

²⁶⁵ Scott Donaldson, *The Suburban Myth* (New York, Columbia Press, 1969), 172-173.

either in his role as lord of the suburban castle, or in the form of substitute father-figure roles played out by popular leaders of the time like President Eisenhower, “Ike”, or child-care expert Dr. Spock:

The work under consideration takes for granted and studies the “great American celebration” of white middle-class America, as does much of the work written during the fifties. One is hard pressed to find awareness that the social and ideological conflicts of the 1960s were germinating and would soon burst forth.... Its locations are the new suburbs and expanding corporations and it is written by men, again, as was most social science of the period....²⁶⁶

On the other hand, according to Breines, these classic pop sociologies of the 1950s also identified a conflicting level of anxiety in regard to the potential dangers posed by the newly emerging structures of power in the post-war period:

The five authors are linked by a shared concern about some of the large social and economic transitions taking place in the 1950s: specialization and bureaucratization at work; growing importance of secondary institutions in the socialization process, especially the peer group, and the concomitant decline of the power of parents to shape their children; and the rise of a mass consumer culture able to shape needs, goals, and even personality....

Into this anomic situation step new guides to taste and behavior: the advertisers, mass media, and professionals, especially mental health professionals. In *Crestview Heights* [*sic*], the latter are constantly called upon to give guidance of all sorts. The authors were particularly concerned with the conformity that seemed to result from social change for the upwardly mobile.²⁶⁷

Other influential Canadian social historians who have written about the importance of *Crestwood Heights* for our understanding of the post-war period, and who cite Breines as an important source for their research, pick up on the image of the period she draws from these texts. For example, in her work entitled *The Trouble with Normal*, Mary Louise Adams describes the post-war era in the following way:

On the one hand, the period has come to represent a lost era of family values for which many now yearn; on the other hand, it is seen as a time of unceasing conformity, repression, and blandness, broken only by the tyrannies of McCarthyist anti-Communism.... While the postwar period was a time when social conformity was valued by many and when popular culture frequently traded in images of smiling suburban housewives, it was also a period that saw tremendous changes on the social landscape.”²⁶⁸

According to Adams, the era was either characterized by a sense of relief and domestic bliss or as a time of successfully enforced repression of counter-cultural movements. Adams articulates, even

²⁶⁶ Wini Breines, “Gender and Some Social Science”, 72.

²⁶⁷ Wini Breines, “Gender and Some Social Science”, 72.

²⁶⁸ Mary Louise Adams, *The Trouble With Normal*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 18.

more pointedly than Breines, the extent to which in her mind, and in many others starting with Seeley himself, this dominant conservative cultural discourse became centered on family and educational issues. Adams cites Canadian historian Doug Owsen's explanation of how post-war conservatism came to this particular focus on the nuclear family:

According to historian Doug Owsen, the physical and emotional disruptions caused by the war, and the significant social changes it motivated, oriented Canadians toward home, family, and stability to a degree unparalleled in other historical periods in this country.²⁶⁹

However, according to Adams, this retreat in the 1950s to the insularity of family life was not merely a reaction to the wars that had just ended, but also a kind of hiding one's face in the sand in regard to the new and strange kind of warfare that had just begun. Indeed, open warfare might have been a relief to the people of North America in comparison to the insidious anxiety of the Cold War. In some ways to fight an enemy that you can see is easier to cope with than hidden threats like thermo-nuclear weapons and espionage. The intensification of private everydayness may have proven a useful antidote to the new anxieties of the Cold War, according to Adams:

In magazines, school board curricula and instructional films, an idealized image of the nuclear family was promoted as the first line of defence against the perceived insecurity of the cold-war years. Family life would shield Canada from the threat of outside turmoil.²⁷⁰

On the other side of the suburban white picket fence then, according to Adams, there lay a dangerous gathering of perceived threats motivating the retreat to family life on the part of a public hypersensitive to conflict. On a superficial level, these threats took on the politicized form of a fear of resurgent fascistic power under the veil of scientific expertise, bureaucracy or communism. Indeed, cold-war anxieties may perhaps be said to have reached their apex in the pervasive anti-communist hysteria that spread across North America in the fifties. According to Adams:

In Canada, the East-West conflict that eventually came to be known as the Cold War started in 1945 when Igor Gouzenko, a cipher clerk in the Soviet embassy in Ottawa, defected and claimed that the Soviets had been running a spy ring in Canada. Investigations into his allegations focused national attention on the need for internal defences against communism. According to Len Scher, in his book on the Canadian cold war, an unsuccessful search for spy rings gave way to efforts to track "domestic dissidents". Between October 1950 and June 1951, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) dealt with 54,000 requests to screen both civil servants and private sector workers. Those who were

²⁶⁹ Adams, *The Trouble with Normal*, 20.

²⁷⁰ Adams, *The Trouble with Normal*, 21.

most likely to be put under surveillance included labor organizers, members of communist and socialist organizations, peace activists, and homosexuals.²⁷¹

This anti-communist hysteria in Canada even spread into the policy and curriculum of such local institutions as the Toronto Board of Education. In the wake of the Korean War, the Board:

...distributed a pamphlet which illustrated how the socialist-communist idea of taking from each according to his ability to each according to his need....will eventually result in a living-death for all except the authorities and a few of their favorite lackeys. While the Board resisted attempts by the War Veterans Association lobby group to force teachers to take loyalty oaths, it did pass a motion in 1950 barring communists from working for the Board of Education. The Board Chair, G. Blair Laing, contended that the motion was unnecessary because there were no communist teachers in Toronto, but he was outvoted by his colleagues.²⁷²

This political level of repression had the additional effect of providing a pretext for the extension of repressive activity even more deeply into the social fabric. The sexual realm in post-war society was not without its own stresses and strains after a decade of economic depression and war. According to Elise Chenier, who credits Adams with having, "mapped out the post-World War II sexual landscape in Canada"; the experience of the men returning home from war may not simply have been one of relief:

Recently, historians have attributed the proliferation of sexual psychopath laws to pre- and post-WWII anxiety over the Great Depression and the Second World War's unhinging of masculinity from the taming influence of the domestic realm. Drawing on the "moral panik" model first developed by British sociologist Stanley Cohen, Estelle Freedman and George Chauncey convincingly argue that the first decade of the Cold War was marked by increased regulation and rigidity of sex and gender norms, and by the concomitant popularisation of the "sexual deviant," a character constructed from psychiatric and psychological ideas about sexual behaviour and who came to be widely perceived as a threat to both personal and political security and stability. Historians have rightfully emphasized the way criminal sexual psychopath legislation served as a literal and figurative expression of pre- and post-World War II ideas about containing and controlling male sexuality.²⁷³

As acknowledged by Chenier, this repressive hypothesis about the sexualisation of the early post-war era's anxieties was thoroughly examined in terms of its effects on homosexuals by Adams. She argues in *The Trouble with Normal* that homosexuals were lumped together with communists and pedophiles along the spectrum of what were then all considered equally dangerous forms of deviance:

²⁷¹ Adams, *The Trouble with Normal*, 22.

²⁷² Paul Axelrod, "'Beyond the Progressive Education Debate': A Profile of Toronto Schooling in the 1950s" (*Historical Studies in Education / Revue d'histoire de l'éducation* 17, 2 (2005), 227-41.

²⁷³ Elise Chenier, "'The Criminal Sexual Psychopath in Canada': Sex, Psychiatry and Law at mid-Century" (*CBMHIBCHM / Volume 20:1* 2003), 75-101.

Communist sympathies were the original source of concern, but this quickly translated into a fear of anyone who could potentially be blackmailed by a communist spy: alcoholics, gamblers, and people who visited prostitutes or who had affairs. Also on this list were homosexuals, and though they were no more blackmailable than any of the others, the RCMP formed a special unit, A3, to root out homosexuals from the civil service. Eventually, writes Sawatsky, the Mounties had files on 3000 people, including members not only of the civil service but of the general public as well....

That homosexuals were identified as particularly dangerous by the guardians of national security suggests the importance of normative sexuality in the social and political landscape of postwar Canada. Certainly the vilification of sexual deviants did much to shore up the primary position of the heterosexual nuclear family as the only legitimate site of sexual expression.²⁷⁴

It is in the context of this analysis of repressiveness at the political and sexual levels, that Adams situates *Crestwood Heights* as identifying, or inventing, the norm of the ideal family in the name of which the persecution of so-called deviance could be carried out, and the retreat to the suburbs justified. Despite Seeley's intent in *Crestwood Heights* to indict the moral vacuity he observed in suburbia, according to Adams the paramount effect of the book at the time was to reinforce banal stereotypes of smug middle class self-satisfaction:

For the most part the image of the family that was used to represent the ideal was drawn from urban, white, Anglo-Saxon, middle-class and upper-middle-class communities. The authors of the massive *Crestwood Heights*, a 1956 study of Toronto's internal suburb of Forest Hill, offered the following description:

In infinite variety, yet with an eternal sameness, such a community flashes on the movie screen, in one of those neat comedies about the upper middle class family which Hollywood delights to repeat again and again as nurture for the American Dream. It fills the pages of glossy magazines devoted to the current best in architecture, house decoration, food, dress, and social behaviour. The innumerable service occupations bred of an urban culture will think anxiously about people in such a community in terms of what 'they' will buy or use this year. Any authority in the field of art, literature, or science, probably at some time has had, or will have, its name on a lecture itinerary. A teacher will consider it a privilege to serve in its schools. For those thousands of North Americans who struggle to translate the promise of America into a concrete reality for themselves, and even more important, for their children, it is in some sense a Mecca.

The authors of *Crestwood Heights* argued that upper-middle-class families were a marker of "what life is coming to be more and more like in North America – at least in the middle classes". In this sense, they wrote, a community like Crestwood Heights "is normative" or "typical", not in the sense of the average of an aggregate of such communities, but in the sense of representing the norm to which middle-class community life tends to move.²⁷⁵

²⁷⁴ Mary Louise Adams, *The Trouble with Normal*, 24.

²⁷⁵ Adams, *The Trouble with Normal*, 26.

Thus Seeley and those later scholars who credit him with the creation of our memories of the fifties, have left us with an image of a time during which the tranquil surface of suburban family life was exalted as the norm. All potential threats to this norm either in the form of political or sexual deviance were subjected to strict governmental and cultural controls. The question raised by this repressive hypothesis is whether the neo-Freudian self-consciousness of the 1950s has imposed its own self-image on our historical imagination. There is no doubt that Freudian discourse had achieved a virtually hegemonic status in the postwar period that we may not yet have fully emerged from. For example, Eli Zaretsky writes in an article entitled, “Charisma or Rationalization”: Domesticity and Psychoanalysis in the United States in the 1950s”:

By the end of World War I the United States boasted the largest single group of psychoanalysts in the world. By the 1920s Freudian ideas pervaded advertising, theatre, and film. By the post-World War II period psychoanalysis had become, in the words of Erich Heller, “the systematic consciousness that a certain epoch has of the nature and character of its soul.”²⁷⁶

However, where the published version of *Crestwood Heights* may have focussed on the nature and extent of the repressive social technologies that emerged in the fifties; the unpublished version provides an outlet for the return of the repressed. In this sense, the unpublished version of *Crestwood Heights* offers a revisionist version of the repressive hypothesis of the fifties in which, as Freud himself might originally have predicted, it is revealed that the mechanisms of social repression often broke down. In the interviews with the people of Forest Hill about their lives, none of which were included in the book, the failures of the repressive forces of the fifties are exposed time and again as unable to penetrate the darkened inner corridors of homes and minds. According to the research notes of those who worked on the Forest Hill Village Project team, if the people of Forest Hill sought refuge in the family and suburb, many found it just as dangerous and brutal a realm as the war-torn external world they had sought to escape.

ii) Film Noir

Indeed, it could be argued that according to the unpublished version of *Crestwood Heights*, the film noir vision of the post-war era came far closer to reality than did any television sitcom or pop sociology. In its depictions of post-war America, film noir transgresses borders and the sharp edges of modernist skyscrapers to reveal social twilight zones in which human confusion and conflict run unchecked toward total darkness. Film noir challenges the illusion of tranquility and control that was

²⁷⁶ Eli Zaretsky, ““Charisma or Rationalization”: Domesticity and Psychoanalysis in the United States in the 1950s” (*Critical Inquiry*, Winter 2000), 332.

otherwise propagated by the politicians, media and mental health experts through images of an ideal family life during the early post-war period.

As we have seen, many Canadian historians of the postwar period see *Crestwood Heights* as participating in and reinforcing the stereotypes of the fifties which film noir sought to undermine. American scholar, Stephanie Coontz, also makes reference to *Crestwood Heights* in this way in her influential book, *The Way We Never Were*. Coontz invites readers to consult *Crestwood Heights* for a traditional, “defense of the suburbs” perspective.²⁷⁷ There has, however, been some recognition in academic writing that the authors of *Crestwood Heights* were willing to acknowledge, to some extent, that all was not well in suburbia. According to Veronica Strong-Boag, in addition to illuminating the suburban ideal of the post-war era, *Crestwood Heights* also hinted at a darker picture of its reality:

Dissecting the family lives of an upper middle class sample of Wasp and Jewish Torontonians, the authors revealed what many critics of mass society feared. Men concentrated on making money, ignoring families emotional and spiritual needs. Dissatisfied women wielded power in a community in which they were the dominant adults for the daylight hours. Mothers were preoccupied with their offspring, to the detriment of themselves and their offspring. Both sexes were overly materialistic. The contribution of men and women to the wider society was intrinsically limited. Despite the lack of comparability of this older suburb to what was happening on the periphery of Canadian cities, *Crestwood Heights* rapidly became the measure by which modern suburbia was judged.²⁷⁸

Though Strong-Boag makes no reference to the text of *Crestwood Heights* to justify her interpretation, she is right to read into the book the implication that the overtly child-centered and success oriented culture of Crestwood Heights took an emotional toll on its inhabitants. Yet, she is limited in her insights as to what the nature of this emotional suffering was by the very superficial attention to it paid in the text of *Crestwood Heights* itself. There are sprinkled amongst its pages references to anxiety which was the common critique offered by pop sociology of mass society as Strong-Boag herself acknowledges. Seeley writes that the typical adult living in *Crestwood Heights* must, “fully accept continuing work and increasing anxiety as the price he must pay if he does not wish to be cast out of his paradise”.²⁷⁹ So Forest Hill is represented by Seeley as a kind of reversal of the Garden of Eden in which the punishments of fear and labour are the compromise one makes to stay in the garden, rather than the consequences one must face if one is cast out. But what is missing in reviews like that of Strong-Boag, or in *Crestwood Heights* itself, is a meaningful description of the

²⁷⁷ Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (New York: Basic Books, 1992), 34 and 298

²⁷⁸ Veronica Strong-Boag, ““Homedreams”: Women and the Suburban experiment in Canada 1945-1960”, (*Canadian Historical Review*, LXXII 4 1991), 55.

²⁷⁹ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 6.

nature of the anxiety that afflicted suburbanites. For example, the unpublished version of *Crestwood Heights* also gives us examples that suggest high levels of depression in Forest Hill in the 1950s which would indeed be expected from a mental health point of view as the inevitable companion of anxiety. But anxiety and depression themselves are reductionist scientific terms that miss the particular expression in terms of social problems like pornography, prostitution, marital discord and child abuse that such illnesses give rise to.

In her book, *The Way We Never Were*, Coontz is much more pointed in her description of the social problems that accompanied the retreat to the suburbs. She argues that contrary to the promise of ensuring social stability through the nuclear family, there was instead a situation of “repression, anxiety, unhappiness and conflict” that was imposed by the forced retreat to family life:

It was not so much a matter of being protected from the harsh realities of the outside world as preventing the outside world from learning the harsh realities of family life.

The reality of family life then and now, Coontz argues, is a situation of marital strain and alienation that often ends in divorce or unrelieved drudgery and unhappiness in the context of which family members suffer for years.²⁸⁰ In a telling statistic she recounts that up to a third of all marriages in the USA in the 1950s ended in divorce.

Still even Coontz does not go so far as film noir to reveal what was really going on behind closed doors in suburbia. Film noir forces its audience to descend from the illusion of a comfort zone encouraged by sitcoms like *Father Knows Best*, into a more shadowy world where there is at best only a thin veneer of civilization that is treated more with sarcasm than idealism. Perhaps in tamer versions like Marilyn Monroe’s debut in the 1953 film noir, *Niagra*, set near where Seeley himself was working on the Forest Hill Village Project, the promise is held out that there may be calm waters further upstream, even as everyone is sucked into the falls, physically or morally. But in earlier, more classic B movie black and white film noir, however, such pretence is abandoned. There is only total blackness. In film noir, the story unfolds in the nighttime. Like Plato’s prisoners, the audience is forced visually to follow the shadows on the walls. As a modern equivalent to Platonic rationality, the neo-Freudian myths of ego psychology are shattered for the characters of film noir who are thrown into utter confusion and hopelessness. Film noir characters are haunted by their past, much like the analysand, and in this sense are clearly influenced by the Freudian zeitgeist of the times, but

²⁸⁰ Coontz, *The Way We Never Were*, 31.

the difference is that there is no way out. For example in one low budget 1947 film noir entitled, *Fear in the Night*, the anti-hero Vince dreams that he has murdered another man. Unlike in analysis, however, rather than discover that the dream was merely symbolic Vince finds that he is in fact guilty of the crime with the help of a so-called private eye. We might guess that the recurrence of the private eye character in film noir is a metaphorical critique of the role of the psychoanalyst.

Much as in a film noir, Seeley had claimed in *Crestwood Heights* to offer a look behind closed doors into the darker realities of the private lives of suburban families in the fifties. Indeed, as we can see on the dust-jacket of early copies of the book, it attempted to sell itself as a kind of sociological noir that offered a “penetrating study”, a “revelation”, or an “illumination” of the “dilemma’s in which modern Western middle-class people find themselves” in any North American “Big City”.²⁸¹ The book did stir up controversy over its conclusion that the children of the idle rich had no better mental health than the rest of the population. It also raised public ire over its rather bold sarcasm in regard to the value placed on superficial signs of status in the suburbs. However, unlike film noir depictions of life in Big Cities in North America, *Crestwood Heights* failed to report anything substantive about sexuality or other potentially more explosive areas of social tension in Forest Hill. In fact, in regard to these matters its observations were rather tame. For example, according to Scott Donaldson, Seeley’s book found sexual habits in Forest Hill, “highly moral and monogamous”, as the images in television sitcoms like *Leave it to Beaver* would have had it.²⁸²

Now, this was not what blacklisted film noir directors like Jules Dassin saw going on in *The Naked City*, to borrow the title from Dassin’s gangster film set in New York in 1948. This film was released the very same year as Seeley’s started his mental health experiment in Forest Hill. Like Seeley, Dassin also claimed to reveal in his film what was going on behind the media mirage of life in the Big City, but the realities revealed in the film are much darker than those allowed to surface in the book. The film noir’s narrator opens the *The Naked City* as follows:

This is the city as it is; the hot summer pavement; the children at play; the buildings in their naked stone; the people without make-up...

What Dassin saw going on in suburban homes was equally nefarious to that which he observed going on in the streets of *The Naked City*. A respected, married, medical doctor tries to throw himself out the office window of a Manhattan skyscraper because he is exposed as a jewellery thief drunk with

²⁸¹ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, Cover page.

²⁸² Donaldson, *The Suburban Myth*, 175.

love for a so-called femme fatale. The rather overt sexuality that is displayed in the suburban home of the up and coming homicide detective in the film, is marred by a quarrel with his wife who wants him to administer “a whipping” to their son for a transgression that the father would rather reward because it suggests his son has “nerve”. Not only is sexual infidelity, rather than monogamy, the norm in film noir, there is also a leftist political consciousness operating at a subtle level in these films. They often focus on corruption in the daily business world of the banks, insurance companies and media. In a prototypical film noir entitled *Double Indemnity*, the femme fatale’s plot to murder her rich but abusive oil executive husband seems almost justified as revolutionary act. In *The Naked City* a contrast is quite sharply drawn between the exhaustion of the working class who must often work the night shift while the idle rich are closing out another enjoyable evening on the Town.

It would have come as no surprise to the audience of films like *The Naked City* when Dassin was exposed by the House Committee on Un-American Activities in 1950 as having been a Communist Party activist in the 1930s in New York. With such subversive credentials, Dassin was an easy target for the purge of leftists from Hollywood in the fifties. Unable to find work in the United States, Dassin finished his career as a film director in Europe. In a way Dassin’s career as a director of film noir paralleled that of Seeley as a sociologist. Both were Jewish social critics who spoke truth to power and were banished for their transgressions. Dassin, however, was bolder in his critique than Seeley, whose ambivalence about power perhaps interfered with his integrity.

While *Crestwood Heights* itself did not actually reveal what it had promised, the unpublished version of the book did delve into the real world of suburban society, sex and madness in the fifties. Its results were no less riveting and uncomfortable than a film noir. Seeley, Riesman and even more famous social critics of the time like Heidegger or Marcuse, had attributed a high level of superficiality to the culture of the post-war era. Seeley’s “achievement-in-isolation” was akin to Riesman’s “other-directed” character type who suffers from the “loneliness of the crowd”. Marcuse’s “one-dimensional man” was akin to Heidegger’s, “the they” who fled their full humanity in a trivializing of busy everydayness. In the following passage from *Crestwood Heights* all of these authors’ themes seem to merge into one general observation about suburban life in Forest Hill Ontario in the fifties:

....the family, in conjunction with schools and other institutions, does produce non-dependent, achievement oriented adults in enough numbers to ensure the continuance of the culture. The price which is paid may well be a new kind of acute dependence on the approval of a rather larger, ill-

defined and possibly threatening, “they” the peer group of the wider society, allegiance to which is replacing deep emotional ties to the family.²⁸³

While, these conceptualizations of an alienated post-war state of mind do indeed resonate with the stories told by the “informants” to the Forest Hill Village Project research team; at the same time, when faced with the reality of these people’s experiences, such generalizations seem themselves somewhat superficial. To illustrate the deeper reality of the alienation from which the people of Forest Hill were suffering in the fifties, we might begin with the following passage, found amidst the notes taken by the Forest Hill Village Project research team, in which a housewife vividly describes the subtle way that the compartmentalization of suburban life led to a sense of social alienation. Only those who lived through this transition might have even noticed what was happening:

Informant # ... I was brought up as a young girl in an old farmhouse on the outskirts of the city. The kitchen was rather small and in it we did our nightly work. In front of it was the dining room where all the meals were served. In the evenings, after the dishes were washed in the kitchen, the cleared table would have a red cloth placed over it and I sat there to do my homework with my mother nearby sewing or mending. My father had a desk in the same room where he did his accounts. There was a fireplace in this room which was invariably burning as a partial source of heat, and we used to eat apples in the winter evenings. Now in our house here in *Crestwood Heights* we try to have our meals together in the dining room, but these are hurried and that is all we do in that room. After supper my husband and I may sit in the living room to read but the children do their homework in their own rooms. In the afternoon, the children may use the living room for playing records and doing dance exercises and so on, but when they do that my husband is at work and I am usually out.²⁸⁴

What this woman revealed, it would seem, is that the retreat from public life into domesticity during the fifties did not stop at the front door. It was possible, especially in the Forest Hill Mansion, for family members to continue their retreat within the home itself. Husbands became isolated from their wives, children from their parents, and brothers from their sisters as they each beat a retreat into their separate rooms, and their separate socially assigned functions. Yet this social impoverishment was justified as a sign of material progress:

The teachers took a number of students in a bus somewhere and some of them leaned out of the windows and said “there’s the place where grandma lives”. Still lives. And they were shacks. The children used to live there themselves....Some people in FHV don’t use their living rooms. Most of them eat in the kitchen or sunroom. Their living room furniture is covered with sheets. (teacher’s report)²⁸⁵

²⁸³ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 219.

²⁸⁴ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

²⁸⁵ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

It was as if the separation into economic classes reverberated at the superstructural level in a fractal series of disjunctions at other social levels. Even rooms in the domestic home reflected social divisions by being designated as either the family room where family members actually lived, or as the living room, where no one actually went because it was only to be used for company. At the same time that the man of the house often worked for some company in sales, the homemaker and children were often ordered to “stay out of the living room”, so that it could be kept clean and tidy for those occasions on which the family needed to present itself when company arrived, as if they were mannequins in a store front window. Usually, as well, these guests worked for the same company as father, and brought along the obligatory wife and children. The word company may here be seen as a portmanteau that is suggestive of the emphasis on saleability in the other-directed social relations of the time.

Indeed, it was because of socially enforced segregation at the level of gender relations between husbands and wives during the fifties that most of the Forest Hill Village Project interviews were with women. The mothers of Forest Hill participated in the research project as part of their volunteer work for the Forest Hill Village Collegiate Home and School Association, which kept them busy while their husbands had gone off to work downtown. Of course, it wasn't just that the husbands went off to work every day that left the village women with a desperate sense of loneliness and isolation; it was that often, they never really came home. The following passage tells the story of a fifties housewife better than any post-modern film, because it is not fiction:

Mrs M. Lep; (about 44 or 45),

It's just terrible being a widow. I feel so lonesome and lost. I spent my whole life being crazy clean, cultivated no friends, developed no hobbies; just made sure my home was spotless and germ free; fed my children the correct vitamins, etc... What a fool I was, - all I knew was my home, my four walls. I had a maid, but I watched her closely. Yes! My house was clean --- so what? Then my husband died and I have no one and nothing. One daughter is married and has her own life while the other (17) is busy with the young crowd. I am not needed....

I am invited to an occasional party, and I sometimes attend, but I'm the only one without a husband. I sit close to the wives, lest they suspect me of being interested in their husbands. It is really awful to have to live without a man. I realize now that I wasted my life worrying about the dust free corners....²⁸⁶

In this woman's experience the suburban home, which was supposed to be a safe haven, had turned into a jail. She acted more like a prisoner forced to clean and sanitize her cell and shower stall than

²⁸⁶ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

like a mother caring for her family. But where were the prison guards who enforced this monotonous routine? As Foucault has suggested, it was not that they were not there, but rather they had become invisible. According to this woman's account, it might have been the other women in the Village, whether it was the other housewives or the maids, who were keeping a close watch on each other to guard against class or sexual transgressions. But it would not make sense that maternal instincts alone would drive them to such extremes. So who was keeping an eye on the women while their husbands were away at work? While her husband lived, Mrs Lep had been obsessed about the cleanliness of her "store front windows", but then, once he died, she realized that it hadn't really mattered. This would suggest that in some sense the men played the role of watchdogs, but to what end? Deeply rooted misogyny and perhaps higher levels of sexual insecurity amongst men in the early post-war era as identified in the historiography might help to explain what was going on. However, a big part of it may have again been the pervasive role of the company in social surveillance. This was suggested in the following excerpt from the *Toronto Star*, May 24th, 1955 entitled, "Unselfish Wife Can Contribute Greatly to Success of Executive":

The quality of the wife is so important for executive success in today's business world that some firms even hire private investigating firms to report on the wife's fitness, Edwin C. Phillips, Vice-President of Trane Co. of Canada Ltd, said Saturday...

Mr. Phillips said, "The number of executives being held back by their wives is terrific". He said many firms now have direct interviews with the wives, others make subtle inquiries, some even have checks by private investigators.

Business today is not looking so much as previously for the wife who can prepare a good meal for the boss, or is good-looking, or will have 15 children who she can guarantee will eat only the company's products," he said. "They're looking now for the girl who's going to be ambitious for her husband; who is selfishly unselfish; who is anxious for her husband to be something, for her children to be something that she is going to help her husband, in fact, to push him".

Mr. Phillips said: "It doesn't take a seasoned executive long to spot the man who's got a neurotic wife, or who can't take a transfer to Aklavik because of his wife, or who can't be counted on to entertain a bit at night because he's got to baby sit, or who leaves a little early from work because he's got to take two children to the dentist. That's the wife's work after all".²⁸⁷

Apparently, then, the company hired the private eye to spy on their employee's wives. What the company wanted was little "Lady Macbeth's", who would drive their husbands' and children's achievement complexes. In the process of doing so, however, they fell prey to an obsession with

²⁸⁷ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E (this excerpt had been clipped by Alex Sim and copies sent to Jack Seeley and Betty Loosely during the last year of their work on the writing of Crestwood Heights)

cleanliness and mental hygiene. “Out, out damned spot”, reverberated through the hallways of the suburban castle.²⁸⁸ It was an attempt to quell the anxiety of these post-war women about their family’s imperfections. This story of corporate espionage in the 1950s gives the metaphor of the private eye in film noir a wider meaning. The private eye did not just represent the new powers of the psychoanalyst, but the increasingly penetrating gaze of the whole apparatus of surveillance that was being established in the west as part of cold war efforts to guard against threats from within or without.

It was a time when outward calm masked intense inner pressures that must have driven them all, men and women alike, to seek out extramural sources of sexual release like Mrs. Lep’s interest in the other husbands. In fact, this was a central theme of Riesman’s study, *The Lonely Crowd*, in which he identified a pattern of intensified sexual activity in the post-war era as a manifestation of other-directedness. However, he saw it as a kind of “anxious competitiveness” where each new sexual partner was like a new brand that one must have just like everyone else.²⁸⁹ According to Riesman, sex had become the most sought after object of consumption. Again, the themes of superficiality and repression run through Riesman’s analysis here. Contrary to this rather sporting approach to sex amongst the other-directed types, we find signs of a more desperate and even perverse form of sexual activity amongst the people of Forest Hill in the 1950s. Indeed, when we look at the sex lives of members of the Forest Hill Village Project staff we already begin to see signs that the claim of “highly moral and monogamous” heterosexual couples being the norm in *Crestwood Heights* was somewhat of a cover-up. For example, in his confessions to Fischer, Seeley often referred to his desire to have an affair with Fischer’s wife Beatrice. Fischer quotes Seeley as saying, “Couldn’t I have an affair with Beatrice” in various contexts, and records Seeley’s phantasies about Beatrice, “in her yellow sweater”.²⁹⁰ Obviously, there are Oedipal connotations to such phantasies on the part of Seeley about Fischer’s wife. However, setting aside further speculation about the strange boundary-crossing that went on between Fischer and Seeley, and acknowledging that male phantasies about other women are extremely common even amongst the most devout monogamists, we must admit that such phantasies in Seeley’s case invite us to consider the sexual realm in *Crestwood Heights* a little more deeply.

²⁸⁸ William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (http://www.shakespeare-online.com/plays/macbeth_5_1.html: October 16, 2012)

²⁸⁹ Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd*, 89.

²⁹⁰ Fischer’s Notes, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

For her part, Beatrice said she would never even have considered sexual relations with Seeley because he was too small. “He was fey”, she claimed in a rather cryptic reference. However, Beatrice did relate a story of how Murray Ross, by then President of York University and a close friend of Seeley’s, “fell on her like a lion”, in the school’s parking lot.²⁹¹ Such tales provide anecdotal evidence that the men and women of Forest Hill sometimes resisted their subjugation under the restrictive sexual regime of the 1950s. Some, perhaps, resisted in less obvious ways. For example, it is a curious fact that the third author of *Crestwood Heights*, Elizabeth Loosely, never married or had children.

When we next turn to the stories told by the informants to the Forest Hill Village Project, we gather further evidence of various forms of resistance to the norm of “highly monogamous and moral” relationships in Forest Hill in the 1950s. For example, there is evidence in the unpublished version of *Crestwood Heights* that porn was being sold door to door and that there were indeed “Mrs. Robinson”-style encounters between lonely wives and Oedipal teenagers at the time:

This is a fairly detailed and complicated story about her (Informant # 70) relations with an 18 year old boy, # 201, who is a class mate of her eldest son. She first met him when he was peddling from door to door a book written by his father called “Toronto Doctor”, which from the innuendo in her voice appeared to be a scurrilous and pornographic work....She then described a peculiar relationship with this boy in which he stated that he had a crush on her and that he hated his mother. He hates her because she is over affectionate and her love is incestuous He and # 70’s boy had run out of gas one night and early the next morning # 201 brought over the gallon of gas to put in the car. She said, “you didn’t have to do that”. He said, “I only did it for you. I have a crush on you”. She said he is suffering from acne and girls often would not go out with him. His comment on this was, “I don’t blame them”. Yet when a girl goes by he “simply drools” and makes detailed comments about her figure. When somebody offers to introduce him to her she says, “oh, don’t do that, she will know I asked”. In reporting this # 70 made the following slip. Instead of saying ‘she will know I asked her’, she said, ‘I will know she asked her’, - whatever that means...²⁹²

While on the one hand the sexually frustrated housewives of Forest Hill may have phantasized about their teen-age son’s friends, not all the boys were so naive as to seek their sexual education through relationships with the local moms. The culture of gender segregation in Toronto had left behind a long tradition of men going downtown for work and for play. Indeed, we all know that it was the practise of Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie-King during his younger days in Toronto to regularly indulge in this sort of night walking. The following excerpt beautifully sets the reality of the wartime problems of prostitution and venereal disease within the naive discourse of the fifties:

²⁹¹ Interview with Beatrice Fischer, December 5th, 2010

²⁹² Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

Mrs. Marcus asked Alan (her son) if they had been given any talks on venereal disease, and how to protect themselves against the possibility.

Alan: Mom, the boys know all about that. There's hardly any of that around here.

Mrs Marcus: How about when the lads go to these so called houses, --- do they call them cat houses?

Alan: When the boys go, --- they go together and to a place they know is all right. The boys wouldn't take us to just any place. Yes! They are sometimes called cat houses. The girls are all checked regularly, anyhow.²⁹³

The sexual activism of the fifties was not all about prostitution and porn. The Forest Hill Village Project researchers came across just as many examples of adultery though even these seem shaded with darker meanings than one might expect from the so-called "moral and monogamous" couples of the time:

Unfaithful Wife

The facts in this case revolve around retaliation, for the husband had been having an affair whilst in Winnipeg. During this time, his wife was in Toronto, having an abortion. The reason for the latter was purely economic. This was her third such operation. She had been suspicious, for whilst they were both in Winnipeg, he had been paying a great deal of attention to the "other woman". The latter was unmarried.

When he returned back to live in Toronto, his wife asked him point blank, and he admitted that he had been living with the "other woman" all the while his wife was here, a matter of months.

Evidently, apart from normal reactions, the wife had suffered a great deal and was quite ill as the result of the operation. She resented the fact that he was so carelessly having a very enjoyable time.

Months after his return, she met someone to whom she was attracted and eventually met him at a hotel. Her action was deliberative. It happened the once, and that was that. She says it did not help at all and she is very sorry that she was so foolish, but at the time it seemed the only thing that would purge her. Whether she told her husband or whether he found out, I don't know, but she did say he knows about it.

The wife is now 39 and the husband is 48. They have a two year old child, on whom they both dote. This affair happened about ten or twelve years ago, as far as I was able to judge.

They appear to be happy, have many many interests in common. The most devouring interest being politics, and following closely with music and the arts.²⁹⁴

The darkness here, it would seem, was in the felt powerlessness of the "unfaithful wife". From our perspective today it might seem that she was all-too-faithful in her response to her husband's insensitivity. Yet the forces behind her guilt and her loyalty in these circumstances were hidden. If we think back to the *Toronto Star* article about what was expected from a Forest Hill Village wife, we

²⁹³ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

²⁹⁴ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

might imagine that the economic importance of keeping up appearances was what drove this woman's ultimate acceptance of her husband's behaviour. In the following case of adultery, the wife is better able to articulate the psychological price she paid for her willingness to repress her marital disappointment:

Unfaithful Husband

Accidentally, I discovered that my husband had been unfaithful to me. It came to light nine years after the incident, which in no way lessened the shock. A chance remark of his – "Imagine Mr. Blank has been married for 15 years and has never been unfaithful". His incredulity amazed me, because I was naïve enough to believe that most husbands were faithful, especially mine. I brooded for days and nights. I didn't have to explain away my black mood, as there had been a death in the family and it was taken for granted by all, that I was grieving. I was grieving but death had taken second place. At times I felt like the hypocrite I was, even now, in retrospect, I feel ashamed.

Getting back to the revelation, I thought and wondered. In casual talks during the years we had both discussed what we might do if faithlessness on either side were discovered. I'd always said, so glibly, that I was sure I would understand and forgive. It seemed to me that it had to be a thing of the moment, a temptation, desire, all of which would not mean that my husband had stopped loving me, or even loved me less. It would just be a thing that happened. My husband couldn't say what his reaction might be, because at time of discussion, he might feel one way, but at the actuality he might behave in a totally different manner. I admired his sensible attitude and bemoaned my weak brain (at the time, unknown to me, he had been unfaithful, but he assured me that he hadn't and I needed little assurance).

I gave the matter some thought and after a few days I decided to challenge him. I knew a great deal was at stake and I also realized it might break our marriage. One evening, with a carefully rehearsed speech, and whilst having a midnight snack, I recited my lines. I told him I had good reason to believe that he had been unfaithful to me. He turned a deep red and to me, looked guilty as sin. He replied, "I have been, but it was many years ago". I expected it, but I shook like a leaf. Regaining my composure, I asked him if it had occurred often. No, just the once. It didn't really matter then, once or often, all I felt was a deep desire to hurt and hurt deeply. I said, "Then that makes us even". Not a word was said while both of us tried to drink our coffee, cups rattling from nervous fingers.

What I had said was a lie, and after a few moments I began to feel nervous lest he really believe it, so fumbling along, I tried to clarify the matter by telling him that my lapses were mental and physical – saying that it was almost the same. He said there was no comparison and that it was very natural to dream about individuals and to picture situations etc... I let him talk on, wanting desperately to be as big as I thought I was. I tried, really tried. Two miserable people retired to their separate beds. Neither slept all night. Early the following morning, having told myself that I could not go on living if it weren't on good terms with my husband, I hopped into his bed and invited the only course that could make us one again. I was proud of my so-called bigness and even felt happy, but it didn't last long. I would start thinking again, and the realization that he had lied to me would nag, then I thought of my or our way of life and how wonderful and complete it had been. I had felt secure, but that had altered. I was unsure and shaky.

No matter what, one cannot and does not stop loving a person overnight. I loved him, but resented what he had done, resented how he had broken or marred the comfortable picture of our life. All this happened years ago. Admittedly, I have never really forgotten. I have tried very hard to resume life as though nothing had happened. I have been successful to the point where my husband

has suffered no discomfort, and I do feel that he thinks I have forgotten all about it. I may be wrong. My disposition reverted to normal and life goes on again, merrily and harmoniously, to all appearances.

In truth, it is my own private cancer. I cannot explain it away even to myself. I sometimes picture him, in a hotel room, with a woman, nude, in a variety of positions. These thoughts are neither frequent nor lasting, but they do occur.

I know I shall never forget nor possibly forgive. It's like black spot in my life.²⁹⁵

Undoubtedly, in this case of the "unfaithful husband", the wife understates the extent to which her resentment poisoned the family atmosphere. In this way, the negative social effects of masculine autocracy in the fifties must have resonated out into the community, for the unhappiness of the women would have taken its toll on the children.

Another central topic of concern to the woman of Forest Hill was menstruation. The Forest Hill women ranged in their discussion of this topic from the effect of the "change of life" on women's interest in sex, to speculation on whether men themselves also go through some form of the same experience. In this context, stories of sexual failure and adventure poured out of the informants. One woman related how, after many years of frustration, just as she had finally reached the point of being able to enjoy sexual relations with her husband, he became impotent:

Mrs. K.,

My husband was a real animal in his younger days. I loathed sex life and he didn't give a damn how I felt. I never enjoyed it, until I was married a long time. I guess I must have been 33 or 34 (having been married 13 or 14 years) before I knew anything about an orgasm. Even then I didn't yearn for intercourse or want it as often as I had to submit.

When I was about 38 and my husband was 40, I went to England, alone, and was away for 3 months. Upon my return, my husband met me at the dock, took me home, and could hardly wait until I took my coat off. It was in the afternoon and I told him not to be so silly, but he insisted. I was so ashamed. Nothing happened, however, and then he was ashamed – and I was glad, glad, glad. Since then, and that's a very early age, he has been almost useless. No! He took about a year or was it two, but I can really say since then he has been useless. I often think of my own ignorance of sex, and regret that just when I was beginning to appreciate sexual intercourse, my husband was incapable. I often suspect him of chasing around a lot in his younger days, and, so, it serves him right. I am old now, fifty-seven, and I don't care anyways.²⁹⁶

²⁹⁵ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

²⁹⁶ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

In a very poignant vignette, another woman spoke of her friend's despair over the loss of her son and the impact of this event on her relations with her husband:

She told me years ago that she was looking forward to the Change of Life hoping it meant the end of sex life. The loss of a brilliant 14 year old son from a brain tumour had a great deal to do with her attitudes and reactions...²⁹⁷

In this *petit noire*, the eternal realities of the human condition are juxtaposed against the consciousness of post-war culture. It was at points such as these that the descent into madness for the women of Forest Hill began. In the following conversation between two Village women named Lillian and Muriel, we see most vividly what form this madness often took. The note-taker first introduces us to Muriel, who was suffering from a terrible depression long before the possibility of being administered any form of medication that might have helped her:

Muriel is a woman of forty-two, married to a very fine young man – they are financially very secure. They have a ten year old daughter. Her parents were cousins. The mother suffered a mental depression following the birth of the last child....Muriel started feeling very depressed about 18 months ago. She finally went to a psychiatrist. She visited him three times a week....She goes nowhere, sees no one, and doesn't seem to care about anything at all...²⁹⁸

The note-taker then recounts a conversation between Lilliane and Muriel over the phone about her husband Al:

“Tell me Muriel, is Al patient; do you feel he is understanding?

I don't know. You see, its really in reverse, I think.

You mean he's going through the change?

Yes, it happens to men too

Yes I know, do you and Al discuss it, talk about it and wonder about it together?

“Listen Lillian, I'm not capable of listening or understanding for more than 2 seconds. I'm just in a fog, a deep freeze. Al talks to me, but I don't follow. I can't concentrate, and then he falls asleep. He's fed up. I have another pain or ache every day, and I nag, nag, nag. He has every right to be fed up.

²⁹⁷ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

²⁹⁸ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

Muriel, maybe he's trying to help and to understand – he may be going about it in the wrong way, but trying anyways.

Perhaps, but there's a tension in the house.

Do you have much company in the house, the family etc...?

No, no one comes around any more. I don't feel up to it, and I can't listen to anyone – I just sink down under my fog”....

Well I certainly hope you will be feeling better soon.

Thanks Lillian but this has been going on I guess for five or six years, and I'm not really getting better. This fog, I just can't clear it.

Would you and Al like to pop in tonight for a while?

I haven't been out in six months – yes I think I would. I'll speak to Al and call you back.

8pm - Al had a meeting.

Well you come up and Al can pick you up later?

No, he won't be in until very late, and anyways I'm in bed for the night. Thanks ...

All right Muriel, but perhaps one evening we will go out for dinner and have fun, just like old times.

I'd like that if I'm able to. Thanks for calling and for listening. Bye! ²⁹⁹

Again and again in these stories, we see how the women of Forest Hill suffered under the restricted conditions of their suburban lives. They were isolated to their homes, forced into almost slavish conditions in relations with their husbands, and all the while seemingly incomprehensible in regard to the sources of their problems. This took its toll on their mental health, and probably also returned in its own way to punish their husbands and, sadly, also to punish the children.

So they turned for help to mental health experts like Seeley, ostensibly for the sake of their children. Unfortunately however, the experts were also men, far away from home, and under the same pressures as their husbands in Forest Hill to climb the corporate ladder and force the women back into the home. After all, their jobs depended on it. Meanwhile in addition to all this, Seeley himself, the sociological expert who had promised the people of Forest Hill an educational utopia in which such mental health issues might be resolved, is revealed in the unpublished version of *Crestwood Heights*

²⁹⁹ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

to be barely able to contain his own inner demons, let alone help others in wrestling with theirs. In a letter to Fischer, written in 1963, Seeley describes his own private life at the time as if he were himself a character in the blackest of the film noir genre: “It is just there”, he writes, “on its small scale, our obscure lives, total tragedy with no one and nothing visibly at fault”.³⁰⁰

2. Demobilization Policy

i) The Troika: Chisolm, Line and Griffin

Like so many other film noir anti-heroes Seeley’s enters onto the stage of public life in Canada as a troubled survivor of the Wars, in which he had taken part not only as a childhood victim, but also, in an ironic twist of fate, as the successful “Captain Seeley” of the Canadian Armed Forces. Seeley’s experience in the army had lent him legitimacy as an expert in the new mental health technologies to which society was turning in the aftermath of war for consolation. He skilfully manipulated this situation to his advantage and achieved significant academic success in Ontario. Much like other film noir protagonists, however, Seeley’s struggle with his own inner contradictions quickly led to the unravelling of his successes. As we shall see, he overextended himself in the academic world and his meteoric rise to power came to a premature halt. Despite this rapid fall from grace, however, Seeley would leave behind the building blocks of significant institutional architecture in the field of education in Ontario. Moreover, as we have just seen, contemporary historians credit our historical imagination of the fifties in part to Seeley’s work in *Crestwood Heights*. In this work, at least, he had succeeded in constructing a dichotomous, repressive image of the period out of his own neurosis. Seeley’s historical importance then, may not turn out to have been so much in the field of psychoanalytic pedagogy as he claimed; but rather in his vision as a historian of sorts, and as a talented, if rather impolitic, administrator.

In private interviews with me, John R. Seeley traced the origins of the Forest Hill Village Project back to the innovative work during World War II of the Directorate of Personnel Selection (DPS) that was established as part of the Department of National Defence (DND) in 1941. As a result of his successful rise through the ranks of the Directorate of Personnel Selection, Seeley became associated with prominent professionals in the fields of psychiatry and psychology in Toronto. Amongst the personal contacts Seeley made at DND, perhaps the most important was Brock Chisolm, the original Director of the Personnel Directorate. Prior to the war, Chisolm had been a U of T educated medical

³⁰⁰ Seeley to Fischer, 1963, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

psychiatrist in private practise in his hometown of Oakville, Ontario. Chisolm had studied under Clarke and Hincks at the University and had become an active participant in the work of the CNCMH as a result. But it was not his psychiatric connections alone that propelled Chisolm into a prominent staff position with the military during the war. Like others amongst the high staff of the Canadian military during World War II (his personal friend the Adjutant-General Harry Letson being a prime example) Chisolm was a decorated soldier during World War I and had remained involved with the military during the period between the wars.

When Chisolm was promoted from the position of Director of Personnel to the rank of Major-General and Director of the Canadian Army Medical Corps in September 1942, his successor as Director of Personnel Selection was Colonel William Line. As we have already seen, William Line had been a respected Professor in the Psychology Department at U of T prior to the war. In Seeley's role as staff captain under Line's supervision responsible for, "planning and development of the testing and interviewing procedures and with the statistical analysis of the records obtained"; he was the administrative counter part to Lieutenant Colonel Jack Griffin (M.D.), the lead psychiatric consultant to the Director.³⁰¹ Griffin, we know, had been a prominent assistant to Clarence Hincks with the CNCMH prior to the war and would succeed him as General Director of the Association in 1950. As we have already seen in an earlier chapter, with the financial and organizational backing of Hincks; Griffin and Line first had the opportunity to work together under the mentorship of Dr. Blatz in the 1920s on the Regal Road Schools Project. As Griffin remembered in an interview published in 1989:

By this time, September 1936, I had decided to accept a position with Dr. Hincks. Bill Line back in Toronto had talked to Hincks. He told him, "You've got to get Jack Griffin back. He and I will set up a programme of mental hygiene in the schools, doing preventive mental health work with kids". I accepted the post and I hurried back, took an early return from my scholarship which the Rockefeller people didn't think too well of, but I got started around September 1, 1936 with the National Committee for Mental Hygiene. I had a title; I was Director of Mental Hygiene Education and Bill Line and I started to work in that field".³⁰²

It was in this context that Griffin and Line had first articulated the concept of "human relations classes" as a therapeutic technique in which students were engaged in free associative discussions as part of their school program. This technique would become central to the Forest Hill Village Project after World War II.

³⁰¹ H.S.M. Carver, *Personnel Selection in the Canadian Army*, National Defence HQ, (Unpublished, 1945), 35.

³⁰² Djuwe and Sussman, *Pioneers of Mental Health and Social Change*, 61.

It is important to reflect further at this point upon the fact that, though Seeley was new to this group of elite Ontario mental health experts, these three men had long been in association prior to the war. The careers of Chisholm, Hincks, Line and Griffin had all orbited around the growing institutional architecture of the mental health movement in Ontario during the early 20th Century. They studied together as students and teachers in the fields of medicine, psychiatry and psychology at U of T. They also collaborated as volunteers for ostensibly ameliorative social programs like the Canadian National Committee for National Health and the Eugenics Society. Historians Copp and McAndrew were very accurate in their characterization of these men who were to become leaders of the Personnel Directorate:

After 1941, army psychiatry was strongly influenced by men who saw themselves as social engineers. Brock Chisolm, Jack Griffin, and Bill Line, the men who created army psychiatry in Canada, believed that they could scientifically screen, categorize and utilize the nation's manpower.³⁰³ In an interview, Griffin gives his view of how the long-term association of this group was transferred to the highest level of the Canadian Military during World War II:

Now it so happened, that one of the outstanding young soldiers in World War I was now a fully trained psychiatrist in Canada by the name of Brock Chisolm. Dr. Brock Chisolm had been talking ever since 1934 that there was going to be a war and when it did start he tried to become involved. But the army wouldn't take him. They said that he was of much better use as a civilian looking after civilian psychiatric casualties because in the Canadian army there would be no psychiatric casualties. Of course there were! Anyway, they got hold of Brock and they put him in charge of personnel selection as he had been active in the militia between the wars and had the rank of brigadier. So they didn't have any trouble getting him qualified. Brock came down to see Dr. Hincks and said, "What do we do about personnel selection?" Bill Line and I were there at the time and he said, "Well, here you are. These are my right and left hands. You can take them both and build a department". So Bill Line went in as his deputy and I went in as liaison between the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps (R.C.A.M.C.) and personnel selection. The three of us started building a Personnel Selection Directorate".³⁰⁴

This description makes it seem as though they were just plucked out of thin air for the job, as if perhaps they might have thought of themselves as the natural leaders in the field in Canada. Historian Hans Pols characterized their willingness to allow themselves to be catapulted to political power as a disinterested act of social conscience:

Brock Chisolm and Harry Stack Sullivan (his American Colleague) attempted to mobilize the discipline to accept its social responsibility. They urged their colleagues to become actively involved

³⁰³ Terry Copp and Bill McAndrew, *Battle Exhaustion, Soldiers and Psychiatrists in the Canadian Army, 1939 – 1945* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990), 9.

³⁰⁴ Blom & Sussman, *Pioneers of Mental Health and Social Change*, 70-71.

in the reconstruction of peace-time society and to advocate for the improvement of international relations with the goal of preventing future wars.³⁰⁵

Contrary to the impression left by Pols account, however, the trail of historical documents left behind of their active campaign to persuade DND to accept the troika's offer of service hints at less altruistic ulterior motives being involved. It seems unlikely that these men would have had to apply pressure as they did just to volunteer their services. Psychiatric services were not automatically welcomed by the army in the same manner as the ordinary soldier who was scooped up with open arms. Quite to the contrary, as we shall see, there were many in the Army who felt threatened by psychiatric interference. This would explain why it was in fact the result of a deliberate and systematic lobbying campaign on their part that the Toronto psychiatric intelligentsia was able break into the ranks of the Canadian Forces during World War II. Whether they were really volunteering in this way for military service out of an interest in spreading the gospel of mental health for the benefit of Canadians, or might have been acting more self-interestedly for the sake of expanding the demand for their services - or both - they were certainly very aggressive in promoting their cause.

This little vanguard carried through their lobbying efforts with the Federal government to establish the Directorate of Personnel Selection via four different channels. In order of importance, it would seem that the most crucial was personal contacts with influential individuals within the Department of Defence itself. At the highest levels, it would seem that the personal friendship between Chisolm and Letson was a significant factor in Chisolm's appointment to start-up a Personnel Directorate with the Canadian Forces in 1941. According to Copp and McAndrew:

...Chisholm had a wide circle of friends and admirers. One friend, Harry Letson was Deputy Adjutant – General, and it was he who had persuaded Ken Stuart (then Deputy Chief of Staff) to bring Chisolm to Ottawa to advise on training. Letson and Stuart were rising powers at NDHQ, soon to become heads of the two key branches of army administration. On August 4th, 1941, Stuart called a meeting to set forth the need for an organization to “classify officer and other rank personnel”. Both Chisolm and Bott were present to explain details of an organization that would soon become the largest psychological testing enterprise in the country's history.³⁰⁶

Unfortunately, Copp and McAndrew do not trace the source of the connection between Chisolm and Letson, but a brief comparison of their careers would suggest that they would have had multiple opportunities to make contact, and that they would have had a lot in common. Both men had been wounded terribly during World War I. Letson had lost the use of his leg while Chisolm was once

³⁰⁵ Pols, “Between the Laboratory and Life”, 135–162.

³⁰⁶ Copp and McAndrew, *Battle Exhaustion*, 31.

removed from the front lines because of shell shock and again, late in the war, “received a deep, dirty and offensive gutter flesh wound from a piece of German shell in his left thigh”.³⁰⁷ Both men received the Military Cross for their valour in battle. After the war, both became academic types who, like typical Canadian scholars of the time, pursued post-doctoral studies in London, England. Though academically inclined, both men kept their hands in the more practical worlds of business and the military. While Chisolm was establishing a successful medical practise in Oakville, a prosperous suburb of Toronto; Letson found time away from his teaching duties at the University of British Columbia to transform the engineering firm he inherited from his father into a ship-building giant that “proved to be of vital importance during the Second World War”.³⁰⁸ The determination of both men to forge connections between their work in private business and military affairs foretold the emerging phenomenon of the military-industrial complex.

For his part, Chisolm “became the commanding officer of the Lorne Rifles with the rank of lieutenant colonel. In the late 1930s, when the number of militia regiments was cut back, he became commander of the Lorne Scots with the rank of full colonel”.³⁰⁹ This continued involvement in the military was an important networking opportunity, just as was Chisolm’s involvement in the activities of the CNCMH. As historian John English has noted, “the Canadian militia in the interwar years was less a war machine than a social organization”.³¹⁰ Indeed, it may have been through their inter-war military activities that Chisolm and Letson somehow made contact and built a relationship that proved to be more than just social. Letson had himself also become a Commander of the Officer Training Corps at UBC during this time period. In any event, their shared commitment to the application of their engineering skills at the intersection of the social and military fields was rewarded by their rapid promotion to the pinnacle of Canadian Military Administration during World War II. Medical historian John Farley himself suggested, in the most recent semi-biographical study of Chisolm, that, “Chisolm’s career did not advance because of his psychiatric work but because of his decision to remain in the Canadian militia after the War”.³¹¹

It might seem strange that men so badly mangled in combat, would want to return to the scene of the crime, but where others might respond by flight, these two men were rather the types to seek to

³⁰⁷ John Farley, *Brock Chisolm, The World Health Organization, & the Cold War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), 31.

³⁰⁸ David Twiston Davies, *Canada from Afar: The Daily Telegraph Book of Canadian Obituaries* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1996), 16-17.

³⁰⁹ Farley, *Brock Chisolm, The World Health Organization & the Cold War*, 33.

³¹⁰ Farley, *Brock Chisolm, The World Health Organization & the Cold War*, 33.

³¹¹ Farley, *Brock Chisolm, The World Health Organization & the Cold War*, 33.

redeem their suffering. Though their efforts along these lines to make the Canadian Forces more humane during the war were undoubtedly sincere, it would seem that they carried within them the scars of ancient battles. This can be seen not only in the elitist presuppositions of their personal career climbing within the military, but also in the extent to which Chisolm, in particular, advocated the use of psychiatric insight for sadistic purposes in war, and for social control purposes in peacetime. For example, Chisolm blamed problems of battle exhaustion, formerly known as shell shock, on the ways in which western culture makes men soft:

As a Freudian, he blamed battle exhaustion on parents who were raising children who were unable to handle fear. He told a meeting of US military surgeons [in 1943] that a ‘whole generation of English speaking peoples has been brought up under the slogan ‘safety first’ ... the baddest child is the child who takes any chances of getting hurt’. A generation had been raised, ‘specifically trained to repress aggression and not to be able to fight’. Loaded down with these moral scruples, soldiers soon ran into trouble”.³¹²

Chisolm even went so far, according to his biographer Alan Irving, as to define the mental health of a good soldier in the following, shocking, terms, “He must be able to hate and kill without crippling degrees of guilt”.³¹³ Yet, historians like Farley and Irving continue to promote the image Chisolm as a crusader for world peace!

It is not only his efforts to apply psychiatric techniques to military training that are revealing in terms of the conflicts within Chisolm as a social engineer, it is also his advocacy of eugenic methods of social control that raise questions about his intentions. Historian Ian Dowbiggin observed that Chisolm consistently, “revealed his inveterate fondness for broad schemes of social engineering, a taste that dated back to his early years in the mental hygiene movement, when he was surrounded by other physicians with pro-eugenic opinions”.³¹⁴ Here Dowbiggin supplies his major circumstantial evidence of Chisolm’s eugenicist beliefs; his familiarity with the leaders of the Toronto psychiatric intelligentsia amongst whom were counted C. K. Clarke and Clarence Hincks and C. B. Farrar; and his active support of the mental hygiene movement initiated by these men through the work of the Eugenics Society and the Canadian National Committee on Mental Health:

Chisolm’s connections to Hincks, Clarke, and the mental hygiene movement not only signalled his resolve to promote psychiatry as an indispensable medical specialty in the struggle to prevent disease.

³¹² Farley, *Brock Chisolm, The World Health Organization & the Cold War*, 38.

³¹³ Alan Irving, *Brock Chisolm: Doctor to the World* (Markham: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1998), 48.

³¹⁴ Ian Dowbiggin, ““Prescription for Survival”: Brock Chisolm, Sterilization, and Mental Health in the Cold War Era”, in J. Moran and D. Wright ed., *Mental Health and Canadian Society: Historical Perspectives* (McGill-Queen’s University Press: 2006), 182.

They also indicate his indebtedness to the eugenics movements of the early twentieth century. As part of his advocacy on behalf of the Mental Health Movement, for example, we have already seen how in his testimony in the Dorothy Palmer Trial of 1937, Chisolm defended the arguments of the Eugenics Society of Canada that, “the country was facing a biological crisis triggered by the fertility of the less intelligent groups in society”.³¹⁵ Chisolm also supported the primary eugenicist method for dealing with this problem, the sterilization of those deemed “unfit” according to standards of mental health that extended to intellectual capacity....

By the outbreak of World War II, Chisolm had concluded that what the world needed most of all was “proper methods of birth control” that would make the lives of the civilized, intelligent classes happier, and curtail the fertility of the relatively uncivilized and less intelligent groups around the world.³¹⁶

Even after 1945, by which time the morally reprehensible results of a policy of eugenic sterilization of the mentally ill had become plain for all to see, Chisolm continued to advocate voluntary sterilization to address global problems of over-population. Only now, Chisolm did not justify such measures on the grounds of limiting the spread of hereditary mental illness or defective intelligence; rather he justified it in a “Letter to the Editor” of *Maclean’s* magazine of 1959 as a necessary measure to prevent the spread of communism.³¹⁷ Chisolm never really relinquished his concern about the increasing power of the broad masses of people whom he viewed as politically incapable because of their limited intelligence. This was captured in a radio interview with Chisolm of 1956 in which he said:

The public’s will is no guarantee of a strong democracy. If there are enough weak, dependent, faithful, obedient, immature, irresponsible, superstitious or hating people, or people who want to be followers in a population, a ‘strong man’ will be what they want...The average man does not trouble himself to be able to vote intelligently – he thinks in local terms, short – term advantages.³¹⁸

There is something inherently aggressive and intrusive about public advocacy for sterilization of any kind. But this should not surprise us from a man who survived three years in the trenches during World War I, and then after the war successfully manoeuvred himself to the highest levels of government. Aggression was obviously a predominant characteristic of Chisolm’s personality, predictably compensated for by abstract activism in the cause of world peace. Indeed, it may have been more than an appeal to his vanity that spurred him to run as a conservative candidate for the riding of Esquimalt, British Columbia in the provincial elections of 1956.

³¹⁵ Dowbiggin, “Prescription for Survival”, 181.

³¹⁶ Dowbiggin, “Prescription for Survival”, 177.

³¹⁷ Dowbiggin, “Prescription for Survival”, 187.

³¹⁸ Farley, *Brock Chisolm, The World Health Organization, and the Cold War*, 199.

In addition to utilizing his personal connection to Letson, there is evidence that with the outbreak of war, Chisolm, and others of the Toronto psychiatric intelligentsia, sought various other connections within the Department of Defence through whom they might take advantage of the opportunity the war provided to lobby for an expansion of their powers. For example, the records of the National Archives of Canada include a letter marked confidential sent by a Sergeant J.M. Carswell, who had served in World War I under the maverick commander of the Canadian Machine Gun Corps Brigadier – General Raymond Brutinel, to the Adjutant General on behalf of the Toronto psychiatric elite. In the letter Carswell lists Chisolm, Bott, Line and Hincks as “prominent amongst those who are definitely anxious to see something done along this line and have expressed their willingness to help me forward it in any way they can”. Carswell reports that it was this group’s “general opinion that a Director of Psychological Research and Training should be appointed by the Department of Defence, with power and funds to experiment and build an organization”.³¹⁹ Of course, this was exactly the sort of position that was eventually to be created by the Adjutant General’s office under the title of Director of Personnel Selection, which was to be filled by Chisolm and his fellow eugenicists, Bill Line and Jack Griffin.

Now, working from within the organization was an effective strategy adopted by psychiatric interests to influence the Department of Defense, but these sophisticated operators knew that pressure from external organizations could also play a part in achieving their aims. Thus, they also pursued their lobbying efforts through popular interest groups like the Eugenics Society of Canada and allied professional interest groups like the newly founded Canadian Psychological Association (CPA). In an exchange of correspondence between the G. Radcliffe, Secretary of the Eugenics Society and the Adjutant General’s Office during the winter of 1939, the Department of Defense is shown to be cooperative in providing the Eugenics Society with information regarding, “the number and percentage of recruits rejected on account of mental disabilities”.³²⁰ This was obviously highly useful information to eugenicists eager to show that mental defectiveness was not only a matter of educational interest but also a national security concern. Moreover, the Eugenics Society would naturally also have an interest in gathering any statistics that might bolster their claims in regard to the high numbers of mental defectives in the population. Of course, their concern was not so much to

³¹⁹ J.M. Carswell to Adjutant General H. F. H. Hertzberg, June 5th, 1940, Library and Archives Canada, Department of National Defense Fonds, Directorate of Personnel Selection, [textual record] 1944-1964, RG24-C-3, R112-166-3-E, Vol I, File 8.

³²⁰ Col M. S. to G. Radcliffe Esq., Secretary, the Eugenics Society of Canada, November 25th 1939 Library and Archives Canada, Directorate of Personnel Selection, [textual record] 1944-1964, RG24-C-3, R112-166-3-E, Vol 3, File 1.

make treatment available to these people, but to justify their segregation, exclusion, and sterilization as an internal security measure.

In any event, the Eugenics Society was provided information by the Department of Defense showing that, during the year in question “6,000 troops out of 61,000” recruits were rejected on the basis of mental defectiveness. The Eugenics Society used this statistic to justify their call, in the fall of 1939, for the Department of Defense to establish a psychological directorate, “in order to see to it that no round pegs are placed in square holes”. The question must be raised here as to whether or not the backing of the Eugenics Society for the calls of Toronto psychiatry for a psychological service in the army was motivated simply by a desire to contribute to the war effort by improving the “efficiency” of the troops. Certainly the metaphor of “round pegs and square holes” is repeated *ad nauseum* in the planning documents of the DND Personnel Directorate once it becomes fully established under the leadership of Chisolm, Line and Griffin in 1941. In fact, it is this phrase that is used, in reverse, by Copp and McAndrew as the title for their chapter on the history of the Personnel Selection Directorate in the DND during World War II, “Square Pegs and Round Holes: The Impact of Personnel Selection”. They refer in this chapter to the use of this language by Brigadier J. A. Linton, Director of Medical Services for the newly established I Canadian Corps in June of 1941 as part of his active participation in the campaign within DND to initiate a psychological directorate that would use testing to classify new recruits:

Brigadier J. A. Linton, the Director of Medical Services (DMS) for the newly established I Canadian Corps, strongly supported testing although he had no clear idea of what the available tests measured. He had chaired the committee examining the question in Canada and had become convinced that in a large organization like the army, “we are bound to have square pegs and round holes. If we can prevent them from coming together....we should save an enormous amount of time and effort”.³²¹

In light of this almost compulsive reiteration of the phrase “round pegs and square holes”, possibly traceable to the early letters from the ESC on the question, it may be appropriate to question whether, in addition to the concern for military efficiency, there was a sexual subtext in play here. That subtext might have been a warning against miscegenation, class cross-fertilization, or the spread by reproductive means of “defectiveness” that might weaken British “stock”. Such a danger might have appeared to eugenicists at the time as of particular concern in regard to troops who were to represent the finest specimens of the race. It is interesting to note that none of the official histories of the formation of the new Personnel Selection Directorate in 1941 make reference to the involvement of

³²¹ Copp and McAndrew, *Battle Exhaustion*, 29.

lobbying efforts by the ESC. This may reflect the cognitive dissonance that must naturally disturb Canadian historians when faced with evidence of racial undertones in the policy of their own state, despite its ostensible purpose at the time being to liberate the people of Europe from the racial policies of the Nazi regime. Yet, it is clear that the Eugenics Society lobbied the DND on behalf of the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA). It is also clear that the leadership of the ESC, the CNCMH and the CPA were overlapping, which suggests that the idea of a cabal amongst the psychiatric intelligentsia in Toronto was more than just science fiction.

The Secretary to the Eugenics Society, G. Radcliffe wrote approvingly to the Minister of National Defence that:

“The Eugenics Society notes that Canadian psychologists have offered to co-operate with the Department of Defence”.³²²

The CPA, meanwhile, had been established just a few months prior to this letter from the Eugenics Society to the Minister of Defence. In April of 1939, Bott, Line, Blatz, Griffin and others met in Toronto to establish this additional form of association. They were all already also members of the CNCMH. They also met to set up a War Committee, otherwise known as the Test Construction Committee, of the CPA. The goal of this Committee, on which Bott and Line served, was to “construct a test for use in the Canadian Army”.³²³ Of course this was two years before the need for such a test was officially sanctioned by the DND, but these psychologists were eager to serve their country once war with Germany had been declared. They were doing this long-term planning it would seem, out of a sense of patriotism. As it turned out, however, once the DND established its Personnel Directorate under the troika of Chisolm, Line and Griffin in 1941, the test that was developed by the “War Committee” of the CPA, which came to be known as the “M test”, became the mainstay instrument used by the military for personnel selection and classification for the duration of World War II. The conservative ideology behind this test, which reflected the links of the members of the CPA “War Committee” with the leadership of the CNCMH and the ESC, is apparent in the “Preliminary Memorandum on the Use of Psychological Methods in Wartime”, submitted by the CPA to the National Research Council in September of 1939. This memorandum states that the major contribution which psychology could make to military operations at that time was in regard to

³²² G. Radcliffe to the Honourable Norman Rogers, Minister of National Defence, December 26th, 1939, Library and Archives Canada, Directorate of Personnel Selection [textual record] 1944-1964, RG24-C-3, R112-166-3-E

³²³ George A. Ferguson, “Psychology in Canada, 1939 – 1945”, *Canadian Psychology*, Vol 33 (4), October 1992, 692-705.

“Methods for the Classification of Personnel”. Eugenacist jargon slips into the discussion of such methods in this memorandum most clearly in part (1) (e) where it is suggested that:

Recruits who by reason of inferior intelligence are unfitted for work in the field may be segregated at the outset.³²⁴

This memo served as the basis for the contribution of the CPA to the “Conference on the Use of Psychological Methods in Wartime” convened in October 1939 by the The National Research Council, then under the leadership of the scientifically-minded General A.G.L. McNaughten. McNaughten became a strong proponent of psychological testing as a result of this conference, and his later appointment as Commander of the 1st Canadian Division in 1940 was crucial to the eventual establishment of the Directorate of Personnel Selection by the Army in 1941. McNaughten’s first step toward this end was the establishment of the Committee led by Brigadier J. A. Linton and Dr. E. A. Bott to supervise further work by the CPA toward the establishment of a system of intelligence testing for Canada’s military personnel.

Perhaps the tipping point was the introduction by the British Army of its own Directorate of Personnel Selection during the summer of 1941. In any event, by the fall of 1941 the combined efforts of Toronto psychiatry to work through a series of personal connections and lobby groups for the establishment of an institutional base within the federal government had paid off with the authorization by General Ralston, then Minister of National Defence, for a Canadian Directorate of Personnel Selection under the command of Brock Chisolm. The terms of reference for the new Directorate were sufficiently broad that it was assured of far more influence in the organization of military life than merely the administration of IQ tests. The Adjutant-General R. W. Browne stated in a letter to all branches of National Defence Headquarters in October 1941 that the purpose of the new Directorate would be:

The evaluation of personality and the testing, psychologically, of personnel entering into and already enlisted in the Canadian Army, with a view to guiding personnel into the positions for which they are best suited, as well as advising in the selection of officers and other ranks to fill the varied types of appointments in the Canadian Army. This Directorate is also organized for the purpose of liaison with R.C.A.M.C. in advising Commanding Officers in the handling of personality problems which arise and which may adversely affect training, discipline, morale, efficiency and advancement at military establishments throughout Canada.³²⁵

³²⁴ Preliminary Memorandum on the Use of Psychological Methods in Wartime, Submitted to the National Research Council, 15 September, 1939, Library and Archives Canada, Directorate of Personnel Selection [textual record] 1944-1964, RG24-C-3, R112-166-3-E, Vol I, File 9.

³²⁵ Carver, *Personnel Selection in the Canadian Army*, 36.

Thus under Chisolm's aggressive leadership, it was to be Dr. Line's job, as a psychologist with the university Department of psychology and a protégé of Dr. Bott, to supervise the testing aspect of the Directorate's responsibilities. It was to be Dr. Griffin, as a psychiatrist and protégé of Dr. Hincks of the CNCMH, who was to oversee shell shock and other discipline cases within the army medical corps, but what of the infamous Dr. Blatz? Was he not to have a role in all of this given his eminent stature in the field of psychology in Ontario, for it was only Ontario doctors who seemed to matter at all in federal governmental circles at the time? Of course, Dr. Blatz, perhaps impatient with the more mundane, bureaucratic Ottawa postings in the offing, was given a prestigious foreign posting as the head of Canadian Children's Services (CCS) in England. The CCS was set up to help run Britain's nurseries under the traumatic conditions of wartime. One cannot help but wonder if the trauma to English children was not thereby intensified by the influence of the teutonic child-rearing approach that Blatz had already applied with a vengeance to the Dionne quintuplets of northern Ontario.

ii) A Civilian Similie

In any event, having thus established themselves at the head of the military elite in Canadian psychiatry at the outset of World War II, the troika of Chisolm, Griffin and Line were in a great position to use their institutional base in the Department of Defence as a springboard for their real aim, namely, to extend the power of psychiatry in civilian society after the war. As we will see in more detail later, the troika would handpick Seeley from amongst the many recruits available as their principal advisor toward this end because of his communication skills. According to Seeley, with his assistance, the troika were determined to "do for Canadian society what we had done for the army". This was a much repeated claim by Seeley who in other interviews with me claimed that this elite group of soldier psychologists had sought a "civilian analogue", or a "civilian similie" for what they were to achieve in the army. He said this specifically in relation to the Forest Hill Village Project which he saw as the culmination of these efforts. Moreover, these soldier psychologists conceived of the aims of the Forest Hill Village Project in very grand terms. According to Seeley it was not supposed to be a project of local educational significance, but rather the first step in a plan to "reorganize Canada".³²⁶

Seeley felt that what he and these other leaders of the Directorate had achieved during the war was to "humanize the Canadian army" through the application of social science to military recruitment and medical treatments. In a talk he gave to an audience of invited friends and colleagues at U of T on the occasion of his 80th birthday on April 19th, 1993 entitled, "Tales and Tallies: Reflections of a Life

³²⁶ Interviews with John R Seeley

Long Activist/Theorist”, Seeley elaborated on what he understood had been achieved to “humanize” the armed forces during the war by the Toronto psychiatric elite:

We had finally a modern military force, but here modern meant more effective with given means because radically informed by human purpose and provided with and infused by the psychological and social knowledge and understanding to make those purposes appropriately active.³²⁷

With characteristic hyperbole in this same speech, Seeley made exaggerated claims in regard to the actual accomplishments of this little coterie of soldier psychologists in the direction of humanizing the armed forces:

How did such a body do so much with so little in transforming the armed forces? Indeed, in the end, we did more. We designed the great plans for discharged veterans – which the US Veterans Administrator practically copied later. We altered War Plans aborting the abysmal “Morgenthau Plan” (already adopted by President Roosevelt) to reduce Germany to ash and cement paving after victory. We all but designed the World Health Organization (WHO) and indeed, some or all of its Charter was written in my office – especially it’s all important definitions of health and disease. By indirection, we affected, for the more humane, departments of civilian government, such as those concerned with justice, planning, not to mention, health.³²⁸

Typically, Seeley likened his work in the armed forces to that of a Christian missionary when he suggests that even the British and American armies as a whole came under the influence of Toronto social science:

....the British and US armies were sizeably evangelized by and to a degree converted to Canadian ideas....³²⁹

As a first illustration of the way in which *Crestwood Heights* tended to soften, or whitewash, the historical realities of the Forest Hill Village Project; the extent to which these dramatic claims for linkages between the military and the project were downplayed becomes noteworthy. At the beginning of the text in a section entitled, “The Starting Point”, no such connection is admitted at all. In this part, written by Seeley himself, all that is said instead is that: “This study was ‘conceived’ in the period following upon the Second World War”.³³⁰

³²⁷ Seeley, “Tales and Tallies: Reflections of a Life-Long Activist.Theoretician”, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

³²⁸ Seeley, “Tales and Tallies: Reflections of a Life-Long Activist.Theoretician”, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

³²⁹ Seeley, “Tales and Tallies: Reflections of a Life-Long Activist.Theoretician”, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

³³⁰ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 13.

In an editing tactic that is used widely in *Crestwood Heights* regarding potentially controversial aspects of the study, the origins of the project in the military, were saved for footnotes or, in this case, an appendix, and the footnotes to the appendix. In the appendix to the book entitled, “The Crestwood Heights Project”, the military origins of the project were presented in a somewhat ambiguous way as follows:

At the time of conception of the National Mental Health Project, however, owing to the war itself and to other circumstances, the National Committee had launched no new venture for some time. The activities of wartime had nevertheless forced it to confront more boldly a problem, and permitted it more easily to envision a possibility. The problem was brought to the center of attention by the gloomy psychiatric statistics that were provided by the recruitment and discharge activities of the armed forces, and the related findings stemming from the civilian war effort. These depressing figures served to dramatize though they did not discover a vast reservoir of human misery and mental ill-health and deficiency in all the Allied nations that shared the same orientation to mental health and sickness. Even stripped of some dramatic effect by explanation, and in some cases by rationalization, the figures were impressive and the facts that underlay them most difficult to blink. The possibility, a vision of which had emerged *pari passu* with the looming problem, was embodied, albeit vaguely, in a term that came to have an almost magical connotation – interdisciplinary cooperation. Could not a variety of practitioners of different arts – psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, educators, and many others – working together, find more effective ways of assistance in a major effort? Out of all this, after some study, came the plan embodied in the National Project.³³¹

The continuities between the leadership of the DPS and the CMHA are only vaguely alluded to here, if at all, and the actual ways in which these statistics were gathered and used during the war is not elaborated-on. In a footnote attached to this passage Seeley goes even further into the military experience behind the Forest Hill Village Project:

One kind of ‘interdisciplinary co-operation’ had been experienced in the armed services and elsewhere. Here a variety of ‘applied scientists’ or practitioner of arts – psychiatrists, psychologists of many kinds, social workers, educators, recreation specialists and even sociologists – had discovered that, working together, they could achieve more gratifying results than could any of them alone. Rehabilitation centers, indoctrination centers, induction centers, personnel selection activities: experience in all of them had given this kind of impression to many people, and with profound effect.³³²

This is a far way from Seeley’s later claim in his “Tales and Tallies” speech in 1993 that it was just he, Chisolm, Line, and Griffin who were the masterminds behind the whole operation:

³³¹ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 426.

³³² Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 492.

With perhaps two or three others, they constituted the atom that was by fission or fusion, to set off what can only be regarded as an explosive but ordered change process in the life of the Canadian army at home....It's hard in retrospect to reconstruct how the handful acquired so much and such far-reaching influence over so concentrated and so extended power. But we did.³³³

It would seem that at the time of writing *Crestwood Heights*, Seeley had more prudently sought to avert any suspicion that a small cell within the military elite had by themselves been responsible for planning the Forest Hill Village Project. This would have only confirmed the heightened fears in the cold-war era of precisely the kind of communistic takeover of society that had been prophesied by Orwell, Huxley, McCarthy and others. In later life he abandoned such caution, though he may have exaggerated the importance of the few, himself included, to the advantage of his own place in history. From Foucault's perspective, the link that Seeley makes between the collaboration of Toronto's psychiatric elite during the war and their post-war projects is noteworthy because it supports the notion that what appeared as enlightened forms of social therapy, in fact disguised social control strategies. We therefore might appropriately apply Foucault's observation in *Discipline and Punish* that, "we must hear the distant roar of battle", in grand social engineering projects like the Forest Hill Village Project.³³⁴

iii) Home Child

Given Seeley's oft repeated claim that the Forest Hill Village Project was an attempt at a "civilian analogue" to the work of the DPS, we must take a more in-depth look at Seeley's own role in the processes of classification and normalization within the armed services during the war. In order to fully understand Seeley's particular role in the Canadian Army, however, we must first re-trace the steps that led him there. Perhaps not surprisingly, given the depth of Seeley's career in relation to the key events of Canadian History during the twentieth century, his military record during World War II is actually not the first time his name appears in the Library and Archives of Canada. His connection to our national story actually starts at the tail end of the important child emigration movement to Canada which can be traced back to the latter days of the nineteenth century. Despite his wealthy background, John R. Seeley, then Friedeberg-Seeley, was in fact, a "home child".

According to the Canadian Immigration Service Records, Herbert John Ronald Friedeberg-Seeley disembarked from the S.S. *Calgaric*, sailing from Southampton, as a landed immigrant in Quebec City on August 19th, 1929. He was just sixteen years old. The "money in possession belonging to the

³³³ Seeley, "Tales and Tallies: Reflections of a Life-Long Activist-Theoretician", Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

³³⁴ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 308.

passenger” according to the Immigration service records was listed as, “1 pound”. His passage is listed as having been paid for by the “Gov’t”, which was the case for all the other young boys aged 15-18 listed along side him as members of the “B.I.C.A. Party”, all traveling “Third Class”.³³⁵ The information listed about the Friedeberg-Seeley boy was generally typical of all the other members of his party. He was born in England. He was coming to Canada to follow the “farming” trade. He spoke English. However, in some respects his information was quite unique and must have set him apart from his fellow travellers. Friedeberg-Seeley was the only boy listed under “Race or People” as not being English, Scotch, or Welsh. He was listed as “German”, which in the interregnum between the two world wars must have made the other boys and officials suspicious of this little lad.³³⁶ Though he may have easily hidden his German origins from the other boys simply because of his English upbringing, it may have not been quite so easy to hide the fact that he was one of the few who had been in school up to the time of his passage to Canada. Most of the other boys had already had working class jobs of one sort or another. One boy had been a factory hand, quite a few of the others had already worked in farming, and there was a potmaker, a decker, a messenger, and a “labourer” listed amongst them. Perhaps young John Friedeberg-Seeley might have befriended the one other boy who had been in school during the time of the crossing, or perhaps he wanted to fit-in from the start with the rougher crowd whom he was choosing to join. Mercifully, this would not have been a problem for too long as all the boys were taken by CN Rail promptly on arrival in Quebec City to Montreal. There they must have registered at the B.I.C.A headquarters before continuing their train ride to the location of their new farmstead homes throughout rural Canada. Seeley himself was destined for a small railway stop in slenderly populated farm country just east of Lake Simcoe appropriately-named “Lorneville”, just one hundred kilometres north of Toronto. As Seeley himself described it, he was to find himself, “a farm boy in a far-away (and far-out) lost and lorn little village, Lorneville”.³³⁷

Despite the difficulties he may have had from the start with these uncomfortable new social circumstances, the philanthropists who led B.I.C.A. and their allies amongst the governmental officials of the British and Canadian Immigration Departments might have been quite pleased about John Friedeberg-Seeley’s presence amongst the newly imported youth of Canada. Their interest in child immigration programs lay in the contribution these might make toward, “distributing the white population of the Empire in the manner most conducive to the development, stability and strength of

³³⁵ “B.I.C.A” stands for the British Immigration and Colonization Association.

³³⁶ Library and Archives Canada, Juvenile Immigration Records, Microfilmed Series, RG76-C-4, R1206-158-4-E

³³⁷ Seeley, “Strange Journey”, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

the whole”.³³⁸ As a public school educated lad, Friedeberg-Seeley was just the “right class of boy” that the leaders of the B.I.C.A. were looking for. The goal of such latter-day imperialist schemes, infused with eugenicist ambitions, was well known to be the identification and organization of higher quality lads for “distribution” throughout the Empire. Previously, under many of the original, more social service oriented schemes, like the Barnardo child immigration programs, they had sought a better home for orphans in Canada.

However, Seeley turned out to be a typical example of how the up to 5, 400 boys brought to Canada under this imperial scheme were disappointing to their sponsors in the Canadian Department of Immigration and B.I.C.A. Perhaps because of their age, and certainly because of the harsh working conditions on the farms, these boys tended to be drawn to the more exciting lifestyle in expanding cities like Montreal and Toronto. Hence they often failed to materialize as a new generation of farmers who would build the Canadian economic base which was still at the time thought to require agricultural development. F.C. Blair, the infamous Deputy Minister of Immigration for the Federal Government who, ironically, was to later block the emigration of Jewish refugees to Canada during the war, said of the B.I.C.A. home children:

“We certainly did not undertake boy immigration in order to recruit people for Government Service or the Hudson Bay’s Service, but for land settlement and in this respect the movement seems to have totally failed”.³³⁹

This claim illuminates the context of Seeley’s first failure to live up to the expectations of his elders in his new Canadian setting. Not only was he in fact Jewish rather than “white”, which Blair would have abhorred; within two years of arriving in Canada, Seeley like many others of these “farm boys” had drifted to the city, despite having pledged himself to at least four or five years in the field.

Though he fit the pattern of many of the home children who came to Canada under the B.I.C.A program in his flight to the city, his individual circumstances are worth considering, if only for the light they shed on his overall development as an educator.

It might appear that, like many of the other orphaned Barnardo children sent to Canada under imperial child immigration schemes, Seeley was subjected to abuse once again by his adoptive family. The main interest of the Smith family of Eldon county who took Seeley in was his exploitation as cheap labour, not the clearing the land, or the integration of the Empire. After all, the empire had done

³³⁸ Schnell R. L. ““The Right Class of Boy”: Youth Training Schemes and assisted emigration to Canada under the Empire Settlement Act, 1922 – 1939”, *History of Education*, 24: 1, (1995), 76.

³³⁹ Schnell, “The Right Class of Boy”, 89.

nothing for them. The Smith family of Eldon “all originated in Islay, most in the Kilmenny Parish, and came early to Eldon, in the 1830s and 1840s”.³⁴⁰ They were likely crofters used to the harsh conditions for farming on the Scottish Isles, who were forced off their land during the clearances of the early 19th century to make room for sheep. Seeley’s new master Donald A. Smith, whom Seeley referred to sarcastically as, “Donny”, was one of a family of eight who had established a farmstead near the Lorneville railway station and general store. The rolling hills around Lake Simcoe, and the relatively rocky farmland of that region, may have reminded the Scottish pioneers of their homeland. Though “Donny” was able in this way to continue the way of life of that had been stolen from his ancestors in Scotland, he might have laid claim to even further greatness by association because some others of his family had made good to a remarkable extent in the new world. “Donny”, it turns out, was related to the Reverend William A. Cameron, his cousin, who became Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Canada. He was also named after his famous relative Sir Donald Smith, who was a key financier of the Canadian Pacific Railroad and President of the Bank of Montreal. However, Donny reported of his famous namesake, “He didn’t leave me a cent”.

According to Seeley’s memories, Donny himself was just a poor farmer who lived in a dilapidated old pioneer log cabin with his mother. This pair demonstrated a typical Scottish Presbyterian frugality, both in material and emotional terms, in their dealings with the “new lad”. Seeley liked to quote some of the punitive quips made by his new maternal figure, Mrs Smith. He remembers when he first arrived at the farm that she asked him whether he would like some apple pie but, “without the cream”. She also made fun of Seeley’s request for a bath at the end of the week, “My man the bath’s he had in his life you could count on one hand, and he’s a better man than you’ll ever be”.³⁴¹ We might well imagine how disappointed the young Seeley was to discover at that point in his life that his attempt to escape from an abusive family of origin had only led him into the clutches of another nasty step-mother figure. What must have been even harder to bear was that he had also lost the creature comforts to which he had become accustomed at home in Hampstead, England.

Seeley’s only fond memories from his time in Lorneville were of the local Presbyterian “Kirk”. This plain old stone church, without a steeple, is still there in Woodville, Ontario, just down the road from the farms around the Lorneville crossroads where Seeley lived with the Smith’s. As Seeley recounts in “Strange Journey”:

³⁴⁰ Eldon Historical Society, *The Family’s of Eldon County, Ontario*, Unpublished

³⁴¹ Interviews with John R Seeley

This was the church of Donny and his mother and two thirds or more of the surrounding community. To this every Sunday morning Donny drove us both by car or cutter, and every Sunday evening repaired, by horse and buggy or horse and cutter as the primitive roads and the weather allowed or dictated.³⁴²

In particular, Seeley remembered the pipe bandleader, a Mr. Macdonald, and how he would “dance and swill his kilt at the lasses and weren’t they shocked by that”. The local “Meenister” as he was referred to by Seeley also took an interest in the intelligent young boy. Seeley describes this Presbyterian Minister, Robert Simpson, quite fondly in his religious autobiography, “Strange Journey”:

This Meenister... was a Scottish-born, University of Edinburgh educated, Presbyterian Minister, the father of two beautiful young ladies, and a generous and justice-and-reason-and-mercy Preacher and exemplar. He had been many years before, a missionary, to the Indians in the Peace River Country of Canada where he and his good wife lost their first born – a son – to the ravages of time and place, and the paucity of medical aid. The framework of Abraham and Isaac comes to mind, but this time the Lord, blessed be he, did not provide the Ram in the Thicket, as an adequate substitute. This experience saddened him forever, but enhanced the tender side of him...³⁴³

An intellectual bond was formed between Simpson and the young Seeley and it was through this relationship that Seeley was able to make his escape from the Smith’s farm.

According to the Juvenile Inspection Reports kept by immigration officials with the Canadian government on home children, Herbert Friedeberg-Seeley “left” the employ of J.G. Smith in Lorneville in July of 1931 within a year of his arrival even though, the report states, he was being paid \$120 per year by Smith. The inspection report further records that with the help of Reverend Simpson, Herbert Friedeberg-Seeley then moved to another farm in Brooklin, Ontario, just north of Oshawa, and nearer Toronto, where he served in the employ of R. Ratcliffe. It was not long after this, however, as one comes to expect when one spends enough time studying Seeley’s life, that Seeley left Brooklin and found himself “employed at a Printing Co.” in downtown Toronto in March of 1932. This was a promotion from Seeley’s point of view, not only in that the literary and administrative demands of work at a printing company were far more suited to his talents than farming, but also because his pay went up from \$10 per month, to roughly \$8 per week. Indeed, reading the inspection report, one might think that Seeley had been a favourite of his first employers in the New World. In all categories of behaviour, including, health, satisfaction given and character, Seeley’s inspector marked “g” for good. The inspector even made the extra effort at the end of the report to record his

³⁴² Seeley, “Strange Journey”, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

³⁴³ Seeley, “Strange Journey”, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

impression of Seeley as “A Splendid Chap”.³⁴⁴ How is it possible that Seeley could receive such a positive report on paper when, in reality, he had violated the terms of his emigration contract with BICA and the Federal Government, and had also left the farmsteads of both Smith and Ratcliffe before there would have been much chance for either of them to reap any benefit from the training he must surely have needed as a farm hand? Seeley may not have been a very helpful farmhand, but the signs were becoming clearer even at this early stage in his career that he was already by this time making great progress toward becoming a master of the art of illusion.

The Immigration Inspector’s report does not record the difficulties Seeley encountered on his way to finding the job at the printing company, nor the circumstances of his flight from the Ratcliffe farm in Brooklin. Nevertheless, somehow Seeley found himself wandering the streets of Toronto during the fall of 1931 looking for work just as the deepening economic depression made hope for such a prospect increasingly difficult. Unemployment rates in Toronto would reach a high of 30% of the working population by 1933. Seeley himself admitted to me that had he not managed to eke out a living for himself in depression era Toronto, he would have been forced to go back to the farm to fulfill the terms of his contract. Though perhaps not always reliable, Seeley was certainly ever resourceful, and it was not long before he did manage to find a donut business in the city that was willing to employ him in exchange for a room in a cellar and “all the donuts he could eat”.³⁴⁵ Like his work at the farm, selling donuts was just a transitional job in the city for Seeley while he searched out somewhere he could fit in more happily.

This he did find when he became the leader of a cub-scout pack at Kimbourn Park United Church in East Toronto. Not only did this volunteer work lead to his getting a very satisfactory position as an apprentice at Rolph-Clark-Stone, the aforementioned printing company, it also gave Seeley a start in what was to become a lifelong calling as an educator. Of course, even in this seemingly commendable role as a cub-scout leader, Seeley’s accomplishments were mixed in with some controversy. On the one hand, Seeley was very dedicated to his work with the cub pack as was suggested by the continuity of his attachment to them over several years from the time he arrived in Toronto in 1931 to the time of his leaving for U of C in 1940 to complete his BA. He also managed to slide out of the working class environment into which he was thrown upon arrival in Canada, and into a middle class setting where he felt more comfortable, through the personal connections he made with the parents of his cub pack. According to Seeley he had come within an inch of having to return

³⁴⁴ Library and Archives Canada, Juvenile Inspection Report Cards, Microfilmed, RG76-C-4-c, R1206-161-4-E

³⁴⁵ Interviews with John R. Seeley.

to the farm, because the donut seller he worked for went out of business, when a parent, Mrs. Robertson, offered to take him in while he looked for a new job so that he could continue his work with the cub pack. At this time in the history of Kimbourne Park United Church, like many other Church congregations across Ontario, the use of its adjoining gymnasium and meeting rooms for community activities supported by the local parents was as important a Church function as providing a place for Sunday worship. This was all to change with the move to the suburbs in the post-war era when, as Seeley was eager to point out in *Crestwood Heights*, the Schools took on the role of community center in place of the Church. Eventually, Mr. Roberston, the father of Seeley's 3rd new family in Canada, would land Seeley a job as an apprentice with the reputable east end lithograph and printing firm named Rolph-Clarke-Stone.

On the other hand, Seeley's work with the cubs did cause some parental concerns that were rather tame in comparison to what the reaction of parents would be today. According to Seeley, the parents of the cubs did raise questions about the fact that Seeley would often take the boys swimming in the nude. Seeley remembered that he would take the boys swimming at the YMCA up to three nights a week. The parents would ask him if this might lead to homosexuality, but he reassured them that it wouldn't. He felt that these kinds of questions reflected their rather repressive attitudes toward sexuality. Moreover, the local YMCA's of the time believed that infections were passed by dirty bathing suits so the boys were in fact required to swim in the nude. Indeed, it is remarkable, as Seeley himself pointed out, that already at the age of 18 he found himself acting in the role of expert and counsellor to parents on matters of sex education. In Seeley's view, the Kimbourne Park United Church cub pack was his first classroom.

We can see how important the cubs were to Seeley in the following passage in which he recounted a memory to Fischer of his attendance at the funeral of one of the cubs. The association of this memory to the building anxiety at work on the Forest Hill Village Project is suggestive of how upset Seeley was about the premature death of one of his first students:

Anxious re – work: feeling incompetent
 Noon – 4 different memos –
 Statistical result – disappointing they made a major error
 Panic

Car wouldn't go at all – Anxiety
 Do I have appropriate intellect, "glib", "shallow"
 2 pm could hardly face going back to my desk at work acutely panicky
 Acute fear

Funeral Parlour – very upsetting experience
 One of the cubs died at 12 years of age
 Wax effect in funeral parlour
 Short pants – buried in his cub uniform

I used to take them swimming ...³⁴⁶

Now, the Robertsons had only promised to let Seeley stay with them until he found a job, so once he started at Rolph-Clark-Stone he needed to again find a new place to live. He was welcomed into the home of another family from the Kimbourne Park United Church Community, the McReynolds. Seeley stayed with the McReynolds for the next eight years. It was the longest attachment other than to his immediate family that he formed while he lived as a Canadian citizen. With great pleasure, he told me the story of how the McReynolds children had asked him if he would “come and be our brother” on the occasion of his being invited to live with them while he saved enough money to go to college. He prided himself on how much he had done to influence the younger McReynolds boys who were also members of his cub pack. He remembered, in addition, how he had been treated like a son by Mr. McReynolds who was a Telegrapher with the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce.

Mr. McReynolds had once scolded Seeley, in a fatherly way, for buying a 1922 Oldsmobile with the money he had made at the printing company. He had bought the car so that he could take his new love interest, Margaret, out on dates. Seeley met Margaret at Rolph-Clark-Stone where they both worked in the Hispanic Affairs department. McReynolds senior felt that he would have been better to put the money into savings for college, but doing without in a material sense did not come naturally to Seeley. These memories may have been important to Seeley because it was with the McReynolds that he seems to have come closest to having found a sense of family belonging, perhaps for the first time in his life. Yet, as always, he would move on.

Seeley’s nomadic lifestyle was already well established by his twenties and in 1940 he earned a scholarship to U of C where he moved along with his new wife Margaret Derocher, to pursue a bachelor’s degree in sociology and educational studies. Seeley had formed a number of important relationships in his early days in Toronto that were to lay the pattern for his future career. He had joined the Kimbourne Park United Church Community as a Cub Scout leader where he got an inkling of his interest in education, and he had formed an attachment with the McReynolds as a substitute family of origin. He had met his wife Margaret while working in an administrative capacity at Rolph-Clark-Stone, which perhaps suited him better than he knew. In his capacity as apprentice and sales

³⁴⁶ Fiscsher’s Notes, October 9th, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

manager for this prominent business firm Seeley actually held down a job at the same place for over eight years. His marriage with Margaret was initially a success as well. They would have four sons together.

Perhaps more portentous, however, than his marriage with Margaret was the relationship Seeley formed with a YMCA youth worker, Murray Ross. The story goes that Seeley met Ross when he attended a lecture by Richard Davis who was speaking about a tour of the Soviet Union that he had made as a member of the national council of the YMCA. According to Bagnell's account, obviously based on interviews with Seeley himself, Ross and Davis had noticed the smart young lad and convinced him to take an IQ test in order to demonstrate to the boy that he should pursue his education:

The examination which was given to him a few days later by Richard Davis and Murray Ross was a standard thirty-minute IQ test. He handed the test back in just over half the time allotted; every question was answered; virtually every one was correct. He was a boy of extraordinary intelligence. Ross took the test result to psychologists at the University of Toronto and was told that the boy was in the top range of the genius category, perhaps one in a million.³⁴⁷

This breakthrough would appear to get Seeley started on the road back to academia. Moreover, it was Murray Ross who would later play such a pivotal role in Seeley's career at U of T and York University. Ross would become Seeley's close friend, and sought to encourage Seeley's career from the beginning. Again, however, as will be shown in further detail later, Seeley would also have a terrible falling out with Ross.

In any event, Seeley did follow up on the advice from Davis and Ross to pursue his education at the U of C prior to enlisting in the Canadian Army in 1942. Now, what had been the significance of all these events in Seeley's life in Canada during the Depression era for his decision to join the Canadian Army, and for the role he played there with the Directorate of Personnel Selection? Wasn't it merely fortuitous that the winds of war swept Seeley along in this direction? Perhaps the key factor was the accident of his physical limitations in terms of height and weight which meant that he would end up in some administrative capacity in the army in any case. This certainly increased the likelihood that he would encounter Chisolm, Line and other army administrators during the war. Undoubtedly, chance plays a large part in history, but at the same time one might have even predicted such an outcome for Seeley.

³⁴⁷ Bagnell, *The Little Immigrants*, 249.

At one level, all of Seeley's efforts once in Canada seemed to be aimed at redeeming his past. For example, he sought to break free of his false family of origin and find an authentic one. Perhaps he achieved this with the McReynolds, and in his marriage to Margaret. However, if we set these actions in the context of what we know about his inner life from his confessions to Fischer, we might suspect that these moves may also have had less noble motivations. We might suspect, for example, that Seeley had used the McReynolds to escape from his original duties on the farm, for it was not long before he had left them never to return in any meaningful way. As for Margaret, it was quite striking to me during my interviews with Seeley that he never mentioned his wife and that there were no signs of her in the house. When I asked him about her he said that he fell in love with her at first sight the day she walked into the office looking for the job of Secretary. He remembered "the exact color of blue that she wore and a feather in her hat".³⁴⁸ Yet, it must have been difficult for him to express his love for her while he simultaneously struggled with his insecurities. Indeed, Margaret sensed that he was having difficulties. She articulated this in a letter to Fischer:

It seems to me now that most of his behaviour was carefully learned actions and words which did not express what he felt, and I didn't know how to cope with them.³⁴⁹

For his part, where she may have felt that his emotional life was too flat, he felt that hers was too wild. He complained in an undated letter to Fischer that she was:

....given to inexplicable, unreasonable, periodic tantrums....The wild episodes became more frequent when turned on me, mostly in front of the children. And they extended from issues of policy to the point where almost nothing could be said, important or not, that was not passionately challenged in ways that could not be coped with by anyone; emotional reasons for sure, but nothing that could be profitably discussed in terms of the ostensible argument.³⁵⁰

We can see here why Margaret must have been frustrated by Seeley's tendency to intellectualize and to turn everything into an "argument". However, we might also sense that Seeley was trying to communicate in his own way. Later in the same letter to Fischer, Seeley said that he loved her but he just did not know how to cope with her emotional outbursts.

iv) Seeley Joins the Army

It would seem that Seeley's primary motivation for joining the Canadian army was not to defeat Germany, or Germans, with whom he clearly sympathized. After all, his parents were Germans.

³⁴⁸ Interviews with Seeley, March 2007, Los Angeles, California

³⁴⁹ Margaret Seeley to Fischer, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

³⁵⁰ Seeley to Fischer, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

Moreover, as we have already seen in the excerpt from his, “Educational Autobiography” written at U of C in 1940, he understood the thirst for revenge of a “proud people writhing in the agony of its humiliation”. In fact, at the end of the war, as we shall see in greater detail, Seeley was an important advocate within the Canadian Army for a tolerant attitude toward the vanquished German population. Rather, Seeley was concerned about authoritarianism and discrimination in all its forms whether by the fascist enemy or by the imperialists at the head of his own army. As an SPO with the Directorate of Personnel Selection, Seeley shared the brunt of a general skepticism in the Canadian military about the work of his unit which seemed dedicated above all to finding reasons for exempting soldiers from service. Indeed, as was often the case with Seeley’s position on any issue, when it came to who he thought the enemy was during World War II, it was difficult to tell.

Seeley’s first efforts to enlist in the Canadian army at the outbreak of World War II met with what must have seemed to him just another in a long line of unfair personal rejections by the authorities. It bears remembering here that when he had sought to join the British Air Force as his first choice of refuge from his family of origin, he had been rejected on the grounds that he was not a naturalized British citizen even though he had been born and raised in England. The Canadian Forces, for their part, at first rejected Seeley on the basis of rather arbitrary height requirements. Seeley was just short of the five foot three inch medical standard for enlistment. When the war first began, these medical standards, which hailed back to World War I, had not yet been adjusted to allow for recruits who fell short in physical stature to be placed in some other useful capacity in the increasingly technological organization of a modern army.³⁵¹ These adjustments would be made under the advice of the so-called psychological experts at the Personnel Selection Directorate with whom Seeley would ultimately fall in once the opportunity to serve was granted him in 1942.

In the meantime, Seeley had taken advantage of the space created by declining enrollment at U of C during the depression and the war that followed to win a scholarship to pursue his BA. Seeley was fortunate not only because there was increasing opportunity at this time to attend such a distinguished university, but also in terms of the changes in the financial assistance provisions, and the curriculum that were introduced at U of C during the 1930s in order to attract needy students. Seeley must have had good references and done well on entrance exams to be admitted to the University, but he would have also benefited from the university’s emphasis during the depression on scholarship assistance which was granted to up to 18% of all freshmen. He was able to complete his degree within two years, not because his brilliance enabled him to complete his degree early, as he implied in interviews

³⁵¹ Carver, *Personnel Selection in the Canadian Army*, 99.

with me, but rather because in 1937 U of C introduced a four year college degree that spanned the last two years of high school and the first two years of University³⁵². Seeley started at U of C in 1940 and completed the required comprehensive exams in the general arts, as scheduled under the new BA program, two years later in 1942. It is remarkable to reflect, at this point, on the reality that this is all the formal education Seeley ever completed in his lifetime. He was to return to U of C as part of a Ph. D. program in Sociology, but this was never completed. Even his high school diploma was finished on the basis of exams rather than school attendance which he finished when he was only 15. Yet, on this shallow educational basis he was able to build quite a successful academic career.

In terms of the role of the Canadian Armed Forces in the history of the Forest Hill Village Project, it was quite fortuitous that Seeley graduated from U of C in 1942. By that time a newly formed Directorate of Personnel Selection was up and running and, utilizing more flexible criteria for enlistment, was seeking appropriately qualified personnel to perform the tasks of interviewing and testing prospective new recruits for the war effort. Ironically, Seeley was recruited by the army to conduct the very kinds of testing that had originally led to his being declared ineligible for military service. According to Seeley, in 1942 he finally received a telegram from Bill Line, the new Director of Personnel Selection, saying in response to his repeated letters of application, something to the effect that, "Of course Canada needs you! Report to the Officer Training Center in Toronto immediately".³⁵³ In fact, Seeley enlisted with the Canadian Army (Active) as a 2nd Lieutenant on October 29th, 1942 in Toronto, Ontario. He was employed first as an Army Examiner with the Personnel Selection Office and rose to the permanent rank of Captain.³⁵⁴

As a recent university graduate, Seeley was typical of the kinds of recruits allocated to the Directorate of Personnel Selection, more than half of whom had degrees. According to Carver's descriptive study of the Directorate of Personnel Selection commissioned by the Department of National Defence at the wars end, 41% of the army examiners assigned to Personnel Selection had BA's, 10% had MA's and 5% had Ph. D's. Carver also points out that of the first 50 members of the Directorate's Staff who formed the core of the unit for the duration of the war a full 46 of them were university educated and most of them professional teachers at the university or secondary school level. Carver suggests that the emphasis in recruiting from the field of education was justified because of their particular

³⁵² "Life on the Quads: A Centennial View of the Student Experience at the University of Chicago", (<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/centcat/quad/quadch1-03.html>, December 5, 2011)

³⁵³ Interviews with John R Seeley

³⁵⁴ Re: Captain Herbert John Ronald Friedeberg Seeley, Library and Archives Canada, Access to Information, Privacy and Document Delivery Services Division, Personal Records Division, Reference PRA2010-06622/A1

aptitudes. “The teaching profession supplied the largest proportion of Army Examiners because their training and attitudes were found to correspond with the requirements more closely than that of any other group”.³⁵⁵ According to Carver it was found that:

...practical experience has made it apparent that no other occupation or profession has been able to produce in any comparable degree the type of person who can make objective and unprejudiced appraisals of other men. A keen interest in the personal development of human beings, a quick comprehension of their foibles, capacities and impediments, is an essential part of every teacher's training and he has had to cultivate an impartial attitude towards the many varieties of human character with which he comes in contact.³⁵⁶

On the other hand, later historians have not commented as favorably on the qualifications of those who staffed the new Personnel Directorate. Copp and McAndrew, in their study of psychiatry in the Canadian Army during World War II, sided with the more critical view that these white collar soldiers were unqualified not only as soldiers without any battle experience, but also as pseudo-psychologists who tended more toward psycho-babble than any professional evaluation of whether a particular recruit was unfit on mental grounds for combat or other military duty at a time of high need:

In Canada, staff officers of the personnel selection directorate – young men given commissions on the basis of university degrees or some university attendance – were testing, interviewing, and diagnosing other young men with the kind of assurance that only profound ignorance can provide.³⁵⁷

Copp and McAndrew note that already by January 1942, Line had prepared a memorandum for the personnel selection staff asking them to avoid using psychiatric diagnostic terminology, “in a casual way”, and to avoid the misuse of slang expressions:

Popular phrases like ‘ignorant hobo’, ‘needs a good thrashing’, ‘should be put through the mill’, were, Line wrote, “expressive of the feelings of the examiner” but of no other value. “Even when the soldiers limitations are such that he is not likely to respond to training”, he warned, “it is still desirable to state his case without diagnostic reference or recommendations for discharge”.³⁵⁸

Even Seeley seemed to feel that the process by which the personnel directorate was staffed was based more on the interests of class than of merit. In his interview with me Seeley suggested that officers were selected on the basis of their attendance at private schools or because they had a good English name. Presumably, Seeley was interpreted as such by the English Canadian Brass, showing again

³⁵⁵ Carver, *Personnel Selection in the Canadian Army*, 138.

³⁵⁶ Carver, *Personnel Selection in the Canadian Army*, 39.

³⁵⁷ Copp and McAndrew, *Battle Exhaustion*, 40.

³⁵⁸ Copp and McAndrew, *Battle Exhaustion*, 34.

how appearances can be deceiving. Seeley called it a “class-ridden and undemocratic process”.³⁵⁹ Yet, it was one by which he was able to find a way into the military at last.

v) Suicide Policy

The battle to legitimize the usefulness of psychiatry to the military, not to mention to society more broadly, was not over just because Chisolm, Line and Griffin had achieved an administrative base within DND from which to wage their campaign. They still had to deal with the stigmatization issues which have perennially plagued the issue of mental health. According to Copp and McAndrew’s account, as the new psychiatric consultant with the Directorate of Personnel Selection, Griffin was met with open defiance:

When he arrived in Ottawa in the fall of 1941 Griffin was met with open hostility by senior RCAMC officers. Brigadier Gorslinne, Director General of Medical Services (DGMS) had rejected Griffin’s offer of assistance in developing mental hygiene services in 1939 and he had not changed his mind in the interval. “He said to me”, Griffin recalled, “Well, you got in eh?remember under no circumstances will you treat anybody in the army for a psychiatric condition”.³⁶⁰

In this context, the DPS was inclined to look for an issue to hang their hat on and, according to the recollections of John R. Seeley, they found one in the rising rates of suicide in the army during the war. According to Seeley this was the main issue to which he was assigned once he had been brought to Ottawa by Colonel Line. Line had plucked Seeley out from amongst the many Personnel Selection Officers (SPO’s) across the country for assignment to the Headquarters of the DPS because he had been “impressed” with the quality of Seeley’s write-ups of the interviews he had conducted with recruits. Seeley remembers himself as having been quickly:

...placed in training camps with psychologists trained to interview soldiers and to advise commanding officers in regard to their methods. In the penal camps where soldiers were sent, the generals who ran them had been advised by the psychologists to discontinue beating up prisoners who had been slacking³⁶¹.

Seeley continued in his interview with me to describe the fact that the DPS had been compiling reports on suicide cases in the hope that they would be able to accumulate evidence of a link to the mistreatment of prisoners in wartime detention barracks. With this evidence in hand, Seeley said, the

³⁵⁹ Interviews with Seeley

³⁶⁰ Copp and McAndrew, *Battle Exhaustion*, 35.

³⁶¹ Interviews with John R. Seeley

DPS wanted to argue for a change in the policy of the army toward more humane methods of punishment for soldiers. Seeley even went so far as to claim that because of the success of the DPS in showing that suicide was a problem and that it was the cause of a great loss of manpower for the Canadian army, Chisolm, Griffin, Line and Seeley were invited to meet with the General Staff on the question. The result of this meeting, Seeley claimed, was that, “some of the generals were fired”.³⁶²

With a rather callous insensitivity to the plight of soldiers in wartime, Copp and McAndrew provide ample evidence of the psychological abuse that was common in Canadian Detention Barracks during World War II. In fact, according to Copp and McAndrew, this was the whole point of such institutions:

Soldiers deserted, went absent without leave, or otherwise breached military discipline and ended up in rigorous confinement. The 1st Division opened its own field punishment camp in the Ortona Castle in February 1944 for offenders serving up to twenty-eight days detention. In a few weeks it had two hundred prisoners. Soldiers serving longer sentences were incarcerated in Canadian and British military prisons that had been opened in Italy. They operated on the fundamental detention barracks premise that conditions should be sufficiently unpleasant to deter soldiers from casually choosing to endure them. The camp’s War Diary remarks that: “of necessity initiation must be tough, or the whole camp would fail in its purpose, that of instilling a sense of discipline in soldiers who ‘fall out of line’. It is hard to describe it – the soldier under sentence is not touched in any way, but he is kept so busy doing things, and being constantly shouted at by four or five sergeants, that he doesn’t know whether he is coming or going, and soon he doesn’t care”.³⁶³

The diary might have continued, “and this leads to two choices for the inmate, go back to the front and risk death, or commit suicide”. However, this was an unspoken implication, but one that was not lost on the psychological experts at the DPS who wanted the military to become more humane. Copp and McAndrew on the other hand, were obviously not trained for such empathic immersion in the experience of their historical subjects. They dismissed the psychological torture used in the Detention Barracks with the following throw away comment, as if it might be permissible to forget that these men were all volunteers. “While conditions were undoubtedly tough, it must be kept in mind that prisoners were not being shot at by Germans”.³⁶⁴ It may be noteworthy as well that Copp and McAndrew make no mention of the problem of suicide anywhere in their lengthy discussion of mental health issues in the Canadian military during World War II.

³⁶² Interviews with John R. Seeley

³⁶³ Copp and McAndrew, *Battle Exhaustion*, 65.

³⁶⁴ Copp and McAndrew, *Battle Exhaustion*, 66.

In a memorandum to various high officials in the DND dated January 26th, 1945, Colonel Griffin gave an opinion on a “Suicide Case” in which he outlined his arguments for greater psychiatric involvement in the screening and treatment of soldiers at risk of becoming, “a liability to themselves and to the army if not given the appropriate help”.³⁶⁵ He begins the memo by noting that:

Over 170 cases of suicide have occurred in the Canadian Army since the beginning of this war. The importance of this does not lie in the number of such cases alone but also in the fact that for every case of completed suicide there are many cases of emotional upset who almost commit suicide.³⁶⁶

Griffin’s argument in the Memorandum is that these suicides might have been prevented because, soldiers like the particular one whose “completed suicide” was in question, were often already identified as having problems and within easy reaching distance of help. In fact, the soldier in question who was not named was “on the staff of a recruiting officer”, which Griffin found noteworthy because, “some recruiting officers are particularly vocal in their opinions that some medical specialists find mental or emotional deviations without justification”. In other words, Griffin is suggesting that the stigmatization of mental health issues within the army was in part to blame for the failure to recognize and prevent potential cases of suicide with disastrous results. Griffin pointed out that 75% of all recorded suicide cases in the Canadian Army during World War II had come to the attention of medical or administrative officers but had not been referred to psychiatric specialists like Griffin. According to Griffin, these men had either presented in military hospitals with acute somatic complaints or in detention barracks, “for offenses such as A.W.L, for example, because of requests for compassionate leave or for investigation of conjugal difficulties, or because of nervousness in training”. Griffin concludes the memorandum saying that “suicides have occurred in individuals who have been problem cases to both Meds and Admin and that insufficient attention had been given to considering the individual” in these cases.

It would seem that with this issue Griffin did succeed in making a breakthrough for the psychiatric function in the military. Within a month of its receipt the Department of Defense had distributed a new policy to all commanding officers and administrators on the subject of “Discipline, Soldiers Suffering from Mental Disorders”. The Memo recounted Griffin’s argument that “soldiers suffering

³⁶⁵ Memorandum: Griffin to Brigadier Warner, Department of National Defense, Ottawa, 26th January, 1945, Library and Archives Canada, “Suicide and attempted suicide cases – policy”, 1944-1945, RG24, Vol 2053, File No. HQS-54-27-1-86.

³⁶⁶ Memorandum: Griffin to Brigadier Warner, Department of National Defense, Ottawa, 26th January, 1945, Library and Archives Canada, “Suicide and attempted suicide cases – policy”, 1944-1945, RG24, Vol 2053, File No. HQS-54-27-1-86.

from mental disorders or extreme emotional disturbances have not received proper medical attention". The memo orders that any soldier presenting with such "emotional difficulties" should be "promptly referred to the nearest Medical Officer". It is remarkable as well that the memo stipulates that such referral should be made even if there are doubts about the sincerity of the complaints. More significantly in terms of Seeley's claim that the underlying aim of the DPS on this issue was to make punishment in Detention Centers more humane, the memo stipulates, "under no circumstances will an examination by the nearest Medical Officer be delayed on the grounds that the soldier should be held pending completion of some disciplinary or administrative action".³⁶⁷ Again, in a follow up memo on the policy distributed to medical officers throughout the Canadian Military, the Director of Medical Services, C. P. Fenwick, obviously with the advice of Griffin, outlines the symptoms of suicidal behavior and stresses that:

It is important that all medical officers make sure that seriously disturbed individuals are not treated casually or harshly. Adequate time must be taken to obtain a complete history in order that an immediate decision may be made as to the need for special disposal including referral to a psychiatric specialist.³⁶⁸

Here Griffin has killed two birds with one stone. He has achieved a reform of the punitive regime in the Detention Barracks, and he has assured a steady supply of psychiatric referrals within the army.

For the purposes of our study, the significance of this episode in the history of suicide policy in the Canadian military derives from the light it sheds on the meaning of Seeley's oft-repeated claim that, perhaps acting as the ghost-writer on Griffin's memoranda, he had helped to make the army more humane. It would appear that what he was referring to was the attempt to move the army away from traditional methods of punishment that may have been psychologically debilitating, if not also dangerous and unfair. This issue of corporal punishment, which was to dominate Seeley's career as an educational activist, first surfaces in this context. It is not hard to imagine the connection between his activism on this issue and his early personal suffering as a child who was frequently subjected to cruel and seemingly wanton forms of punishment. What is remarkable, however, is the fact that at such an early stage in his career he was already in a position to have an influence on this question of social policy at such a high level. He was only thirty one years old, with no more than a two year BA in sociology and already he was serving as Staff Captain to the Directorate of Personnel Selection in

³⁶⁷ A.G. Letter R786, Feb 5th, 1945, Library and Archives Canada, "Suicide and attempted suicide cases – policy", 1944-1945, RG24, Vol 2053, File No. HQS-54-27-1-86.

³⁶⁸ DGMS Letter A038, March 14th, 1945, Library and Archives Canada, "Suicide and attempted suicide cases – policy", 1944-1945, RG24, Vol 2053, File No. HQS-54-27-1-86.

the Canadian army. Without a doubt this speaks to the skills he brought to the bureaucratic trenches. Ironically, like the men he was trying to help, we know from his later confessions to Fischer that he himself sometimes contemplated suicide to escape his own blackest moments:

I am not going to play with infantile threats, or fantasies of suicide, or running away, or becoming 'sick'....I have to, somehow, go on to the end. But if fate were to truncate my life it would help – probably all of us....³⁶⁹

vi) Civilian Advisory Committee

We were forced to infer Seeley's presence behind the scenes in the work of Griffin and the DPS on suicide policy based on the credible extent to which the relevant historical documents verified his claims. However, his name does not actually appear in archival footage on this issue. He first re-surfaces in the records of the Library and Archives of Canada as a representative of the DND on a Civilian Advisory Committee which had originally been established in 1941 alongside the new Directorate of Personnel Selection, though it had never actually met until the Spring of 1944. This historical background is explained in the Summary of Minutes of the Committee's Meetings written up by Colonel Line in the fall of 1944:

Early in the War (October 1939), a group of civilian psychologists foregathered with high Army authorities to discuss the possibilities of applying psychological methods to various army problems. It was out of these discussions and the investigations which followed that the Directorate of Personnel Selection evolved in the late summer of 1941. With the idea of maintaining the valuable services of the leaders of psychological thought in Canada and with a view to preserving contact with civilian psychological and personnel agencies, a 'Civilian Advisory Committee' was included in the original organizational chart at the time that this Directorate was established....

In the spring of 1944 it became obvious that in order to deal with a growing number of problems of psychological interest arising out of the Army's established personnel policy and in order to facilitate a tie-in with university departments, business, industry and labour, it would be advisable to implement the earlier concept of a Civilian Advisory Committee....³⁷⁰

We might do well to remind ourselves here that Seeley had first made an appearance in the national archives as an orphaned home child with only 1 pound in his pocket in 1929. Now, in 1944, we find him sitting alongside eminent persons in the mental health field in Canada like Dr's Brock Chisolm, William Blatz, Clarence Hincks, Bill Line and John Griffin on a committee that would advise the federal government on post-war planning.

³⁶⁹ Seeley to Fischer, Undated (sometime in the 1960's), Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

³⁷⁰ Memorandum, Confidential, Re-Oriented and Readjustment, Civilian Advisory Committee – D.P. Select. Summary of Minutes, Library and Archives Canada, Senior Advisory Committee on Demobilization and Rehabilitation [textual record] 1940-1946, RG32-D-4 > sss 7-4, R234-32-4-E, Vol 32, File 108-6.

Line's "Summary of Minutes" goes on to clarify the ostensible purpose of the reconvening of the Civilian Advisory Committee:

The deliberations of this first meeting of the Civilian Advisory Committee culminated in one major interest and recommendation, namely, that the needs of the soldier must be taken care of from the moment of cease-fire in Europe until he has settled down and become re-established as a citizen. Beyond this, it was felt that considerations should be given to the psychological issues to be taken into account in considering the roles of i) and army of Occupation and ii) a force engaged in the Pacific Theatre. As the Army had hitherto concentrated on making sound provisions for the soldier in his progress in training from civilian to fighting man, it was to be expected that similar attention would be paid to the handling of problems of readjustment both for the immediate post-war phase with its emotional disorientation and to the problems of post-war civilian life.³⁷¹

What is interesting about the general perspective revealed in this document is the ambitious scope in terms of which these psychiatric experts envisioned the role of the Army in social engineering projects. In the above excerpt they go so far as to presume that the Army, and by implication themselves as an advisory council to the Army, should have an important role in the management of post-war civilian life. This broad definition of the role of the military in civil society by the Civilian Advisory Council is repeated in other places in this Summary of the Minutes. For example, they suggested that the Medical Services organization of the Army be re-organized to include "all medical and related non-medical services", under the new title of a "Royal Canadian Army Health Corps". They justified such a move in terms of its achieving a new concept of health as a "concern and function of the whole of the Army community". Moreover, the Civilian Advisory Committee suggested that if the Army would adopt such a holistic view of health, then perhaps Canadian society in general would follow this model:

It was also felt that such a concept might have far reaching implications and a challenge for civilian medical and health education throughout the Dominion.³⁷²

This strong endorsement of a re-organization and re-definition of health for military and civilian purposes might easily be read as a way that the psychiatric intelligentsia sought to legitimize the greater inclusion of their work and that of their colleagues in the health field. This would have been to their professional benefit not only in terms of social status, but also economic viability. That is not to say, however, that what was in their interest was not also in the interest of society more generally

³⁷¹ Memorandum, Confidential, Re-Orientation and Readjustment, Civilian Advisory Committee – D.P. Select. Summary of Minutes, Library and Archives Canada, Senior Advisory Committee on Demobilization and Rehabilitation [textual record] 1940-1946, RG32-D-4 > sss 7-4, R234-32-4-E, Vol 32, File 108-6.

³⁷² Confidential, Re-Orientation and Readjustment, Civilian Advisory Committee – D.P. Select. Summary of Minutes Library and Archives Canada, Senior Advisory Committee on Demobilization and Rehabilitation [textual record] 1940-1946, RG32-D-4 > sss 7-4, R234-32-4-E, Vol 32, File 108-6.

as they claimed. In fact, they repeatedly emphasized the broader social interest in “the personal psychological development of the soldier during his period of transition”. They go so far as to say that this adjustment process:

....be regarded as a process having long-term importance, rather than as a simple and immediate change from serving soldier to discharged veteran; and to be viewed in realistic relationship to Army policy, the Civil Power and Canadian Society generally”.³⁷³

But what interest of Canadian society were they thinking of, precisely, in outlining this relatively abstract, and very broad mandate, aside from the obvious interest in the greater involvement of social science experts in its functioning? They perhaps come closer to specifying what they considered that interest to be in the penultimate section (j) of their list of “Demobilization Policy: Basic Principles”:

That in all matters of priorities of demobilization there shall be constant concern for the preservation of a sound social structure in the Canadian Community as a whole.³⁷⁴

Here I believe the essentially conservative bias of the doctors appointed to the Civilian Advisory Committee, many of whom like Hincks, Chisolm, and Griffin had shown sympathy for eugenicist ideology prior to the war, comes through quite clearly. Chisolm, on the other hand, who became famous for his penchant to be politically brazen when he declared Santa Claus to be a bad for children’s psychological health, does not shrink from stating exactly what he thought the import of the deliberations of the Civilian Advisory Committee to be in a letter to the Adjutant General, Brigadier M. Noel, dated September 6th, 1944:

It is believed that if these measures are carried out aggressively much of the difficulty of the demobilization period of the First World War will be avoided.³⁷⁵

This is a reference, of course, to the spread of industrial unrest across Canada in the period following the First World War symbolized mainly in the national historical consciousness by the Winnipeg General Strike. It is interesting to recollect the strong associations between those events and the

⁸⁶ Memorandum, Confidential, Re-Orientation and Readjustment, Civilian Advisory Committee – D.P. Select. Summary of Minutes Library and Archives Canada, Senior Advisory Committee on Demobilization and Rehabilitation [textual record] 1940-1946, RG32-D-4 > sss 7-4, R234-32-4-E, Vol 32, File 108-6.

⁸⁶ Memorandum, Confidential, Re-Orientation and Readjustment, Civilian Advisory Committee – D.P. Select. Summary of Minutes, Library and Archives Canada, Senior Advisory Committee on Demobilization and Rehabilitation [textual record] 1940-1946, RG32-D-4 > sss 7-4, R234-32-4-E, Vol 32, File 108-6.

³⁷⁵ Brock Chisolm to Brigadier M. Noel (V.A.G.2) September 6th, 1944, Library and Archives Canada, Senior Advisory Committee on Demobilization and Rehabilitation [textual record] 1940-1946, RG32-D-4 > sss 7-4, R234-32-4-E, Vol 32, File 108-6.

formation of leftist political parties in Canada including the Co-Operative Commonwealth Federation and the Communist Party of Canada in the 1920s and 30s. A similar concern that the spread of the red menace might continue its march after the end of hostilities with Germany and Japan may not have been too far under the surface of governmental concern regarding the adjustment of soldiers after World War II. In fact, if this was not already apparent from the events surrounding the Gouzenko Affair in 1945, further evidence of such concern at the policy-making level, for our purposes at least, is given in a memo Captain Seeley of the DPS wrote in the early months just after the German surrender as part of his work for the Civilian Advisory Committee. Seeley had been asked, in this case, to do an analysis of Allied planning for the post-war adjustment of the German population. Seeley claimed in personal interviews with me that this memo went beyond Chisolm, who by this time was Deputy Minister of Health, and was brought to the attention of the Prime Minister and even the American government. There is a record in Seeley's personal archives of a copy that had been read by Chisolm who approved it with the comment scribbled in ink, "Good. No Suggestions".³⁷⁶ In any event the memo makes the following observation which may reveal something about the cold war fears already at work as the war against fascism was reaching its denouement:

The Russians are already cleverly and methodically at work. Whatever we may think of their views, we cannot accuse them of backwardness or ineptness in putting them over in the areas under their influence.³⁷⁷

This memo to Chisolm about the "No-Fraternization Rule" for Canadian Occupation Forces in Germany, was submitted by Seeley as a possible "opening gun" for some unspecified post-war mental health campaign. Seeley writes in the introduction to the Memo:

It has been thought of as something that Clare Hincks might say as an opening gun in some such publication as *Saturday Night*.³⁷⁸

What new battle was to be fought? Wasn't the war just about to end? It is interesting to recall that that in early 1946, not long after Seeley's memo, Hincks published his post-war article in *Maclean's*, "Sterilizing the Unfit". But what might advocacy for restraint in the punishment of the German population under occupation have to do with advocacy for sterilization of the mentally ill back at home? Unless, of course, they might both serve a common purpose in pacifying the restive post-war

³⁷⁶ Seeley to Brock Chisolm, May 20, 1945, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

³⁷⁷ Seeley, DND Memo, The No-Fraternization Rule, May 18, 1945, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

³⁷⁸ Seeley, Memo: The No-Fraternization Rule, May 18, 1945, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

populations of Europe and North America. This did seem to be the major concern of the Civilian Advisory Committee. However, perhaps this was not just because of a fear of a return to post-World War I conditions of communist inspired social unrest. Perhaps claims of the likelihood of such unrest provided a pretext for an expanded psychiatric presence in the post-war social fabric as an effective form of crisis prevention.

From Seeley's personal perspective, the question of the discipline of the allied occupation forces in post-war Germany, about which he was asked to write, was not so much a matter of maintaining social control, as it perhaps was for his superiors, but rather a matter that struck at the core of his obsessive concern with punishment, corporal or otherwise. Though Seeley and his superiors, from the very outset of their relationship at the DND may have thus been working at cross-purposes, the clash did not reveal itself here because the effect of Seeley's recommendation was to enhance social stability. It was only later as Director of the Forest Hill Village Project that Seeley becomes the instigator of social controversy.

Counter-intuitively, Seeley suggested in his no-fraternization memo that the freeing up of interpersonal relations between the troops and the locals should be encouraged. If they were allowed to masturbate, as Chisolm had advocated in other places, and if they were allowed to have sex with the locals, they would be happier and more efficient guardians. Here psychoanalysis was being put to use for the maintenance of social control in a way that might anticipate efforts after the war like the Forest Hill Village project to establish a more disciplined civilian population back home in Canada. Seeley put it this way in the memo:

....the attempt to enforce what is intrinsically unenforceable – with consequent widespread disobedience of orders – is a threat to the maintenance of normal military discipline.³⁷⁹

There are some other surprising passages in the memo where Seeley identifies his concern for the interpersonal happiness of the troops, but within the context of a tone of military brutality. Knowing Seeley's own penchant for aggression, however, perhaps we should not too readily ascribe this tone solely to its military context:

We do not propose to kill more than a few Germans and our peace policy must therefore include some way of dealing with the remainder. What we mean by "dealing with" defines the occupation –

³⁷⁹ Seeley, Memo: The No – Fraternization Rule, May 18, 1945, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

and the peace.³⁸⁰

Seeley proposes the term education as the key end and means of the occupation. Already, in these early World War II memos Seeley was set on his lifelong quest for moral education. He writes that the definition of the “educative” goal of the occupation should be understood as to “reform the German character”. Strangely, Seeley turns to Hitler as an example of how to pursue an educative campaign against a people, in this case the Germans:

We must not let the spectacle character of Hitler’s methods delude us into thinking that that was all there was. There was that. But, more important, was the crying need to find a solution to a pressing problem, and the devoted work at a grass roots level of thousands upon thousands of burning missionaries of the new gospel.³⁸¹

Again, Seeley sees his purpose in missionary terms. However, these methods of mass propaganda must be turned to the cause of liberalism and democracy according to Seeley:

An organized campaign to win over the German people to those attitudes, sentiments, and institutions or habitual ways of acting to which we wish them to become attached.³⁸²

Naturally, Seeley wanted the existing Canadian troops in Germany to lead this effort, though he laments the fact that there isn’t time to organize a special force for this task:

Or do we propose to recruit and train a special army for the purpose [of assimilation of the German people]? We do not, and in any case we haven’t time.³⁸³

Perhaps here, despite Seeley’s seemingly automatic anti-authoritarianism, we might detect a subtle but pervasive elitism of his own in the identification of the need for a vanguard to lead the educative effort after the war to “reform the German character”. Such elitism is deeply rooted in Western utopian thought. It can be found in Plato’s *Republic*, in the *New Testament* and in the *Communist Manifesto*. It is also a theme that frequently finds its way into the writings of John R. Seeley, but this may not again be all that surprising given his talent for grand conceptual schemes and his need for self-justification. This talent was first identified and seized upon by the leaders of the Civilian Advisory Committee, who had asked him to pronounce upon the psychology of Occupation. In normal times, as nations trudge through the day-to-day administrative requirements of managing complex economies, there is probably not much tolerance for such grand visionary schemes of the

³⁸⁰ Seeley, Memo: The No – Fraternization Rule, May 18, 1945, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

³⁸¹ Seeley, Memo: The No – Fraternization Rule, May 18, 1945, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

³⁸² Seeley, Memo: The No – Fraternization Rule, May 18, 1945, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

³⁸³ Seeley, Memo: The No – Fraternization Rule, May 18, 1945, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

sort Seeley produced during his hey-days in Ottawa. However, the novelty of the immediate post World War II era, with the total surrender of the enemy, the revelations of mass genocide, the spectre of successful communist revolutionary regimes in Russia and Eastern Europe, not to mention the overwhelming reality of the losses and destruction the war had caused; all of this must have combined to create an era in which visionary promises of renewal, redemption and recompense were the order of the day. This proved to be to the benefit of the professions of psychiatry and other social sciences that jumped onto the bandwagon of producing grand schemes as an *entrée* to the new social scene. It also proved to be the occasion for John R. Seeley to make his name as part of this effort. This post-war utopianism would reach its apex in the Canadian educational context with the Forest Hill Village Project.

Prior to tackling the next task assigned to him by the Civilian Advisory Committee which was to be entitled a “Functional Chart – Post-Hostilities Period”, Seeley made a trip to Europe to do background research. According to Department of Defense records, “he spent some two and one half months overseas, embarking for Britain on 24th November 1944 and returning to Canada on 14 February 1945”.³⁸⁴ It was on this occasion that Seeley visited his mother and brother Frank in London for the first time since he had left for Canada over 15 years before. He must have been proud, and felt somewhat vindicated, to appear before them as Captain Seeley on an important mission for the Canadian forces:

Captain Seeley summarized his observations of developments overseas which he had been privileged to witness during December and January. His report centred around the principles of rehabilitation adopted by CMHQ and the development of repatriation training in hospitals in the UK and at the No. 1 Canadian Repatriation Depot.³⁸⁵

He then presented his very complex flow chart to the Committee:

In so doing he stressed (and the Committee approved) the necessity for considering such activities as a unified programme directed in the interests of the soldier as a person and as a citizen. The Committee welcomed Captain Seeley’s presentation and suggested that, since it formed a basis for active participation of all Directorates concerned, unity of the outline might well be symbolized by an appropriate title: Functional Chart – Post Hostilities Period, Relations of DAG (C) and DGMS Directorates in Personal Readjustment Programs.

³⁸⁴ Re: Captain Herbert John Ronald Friedeberg Seeley, Library and Archives Canada, Access to Information, Privacy and Document Delivery Services Division, Personal Records Division, Reference PRA2010-06622/A1

³⁸⁵ Memorandum to A.G., Civilian Advisory Committee, Minutes of Sixth Meeting, March 31st, 1945, Library and Archives Canada, Senior Advisory Committee on Demobilization and Rehabilitation [textual record] 1940-1946, RG32-D-4 > sss 7-4, R234-32-4-E, Vol 32, File 108-6.

What the flow chart outlines, essentially, are the different training courses toward which troops with divergent destinations after the war might be directed. For example, troops destined to stay in Germany as part of an Occupation force would be directed toward courses on “Nazism, Democracy”. Troops destined to return home to work would be directed toward vocational and psychological counselling or citizenship. It is interesting to note the way in which the underlying free enterprise values of liberal society worked their way into such post-war planning documents. While the Civilian Advisory Committee claimed to be concerned above all with the soldier’s “emotional needs and outlook” it was also quick to point out that, in the end, he was on his own:

That vocational guidance should not be regarded by the Army as a system whereby every man is guaranteed or placed in a particular job; but rather as a procedure or course of training whereby he is led to think constructively and positively about his own rehabilitation within the framework of the best possible advisory service that the Army can provide...³⁸⁶

Now, given the success of Seeley’s memo on the “No-Fraternization Rule”, and his “Functional Chart – Post-Hostilities Period”, he also became the Advisory Committee’s special assistant for the issue of adjustment for veterans to their post-war educational programs. The President of U of T at the time, Sydney Smith, had written to Bill Line asking that he “describe a thorough going mental hygiene service for the veterans”. Smith said the “university is committed to organize such an undertaking”. Smith added as an afterthought in ink on the letter to Line, “but not a guinea-pig laboratory for veterans”. If he was so concerned about this, did that not belie the real possibility of such an outcome? Or, was his concern more that such a service help to prevent a segregation within the University Community of the veterans, and therefore to promote their integration back into the civilian community and readjustment to civilian norms of non-aggression, menial labour, and productivity:

We could head off, I think, the organization of a veteran society or association within the University which, to my mind, would in itself tend to segregate the discharged personnel from civilian students³⁸⁷.

Line asked Seeley to write up a memo in response to Smith’s proposal, describing what such a “psychological service should look like”. It is first of all interesting as context for the Forest Hill Village Project that Seeley is already in 1945 drawing up blueprints for psychological interventions in

³⁸⁶Summary of Minutes, Demobilization Policy, Basic Principles, DP Select, Col Line, Library and Archives Canada Senior Advisory Committee on Demobilization and Rehabilitation [textual record] 1940-1946, RG32-D-4 > sss 7-4, R234-32-4-E, Vol 32, File 108-6.

³⁸⁷ University of Toronto President Sydney Smith to Colonel Bill Line, June 20, 1945, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

the field of education. His rather scientifically-oriented plan for a psychological service conjures Deweyan motifs of the University as a social microcosm in which the students themselves are involved in the process of their own psychological self-examination and therapy:

Most of the program should be carried by graduate students in any appropriate science eg. psychiatry, psychology, and sociology....For fruitful teaching of the social sciences (whether in public or high school or college) consists in leading the student to acquire tools that enable him first to understand his situation as a member of his society, and later to act intelligently in the light of that insight.³⁸⁸

He argues that this elite corps of professors and graduate students in the area of the social sciences would constitute the vanguard of the psychological service at the university and should treat the veterans as simply one amongst a number of identifiable groups who might benefit from observation and counselling. In this sense, he suggests, they should not be the main or only focus of a psychological service. Seeley's presupposition in the memo of a general standard of normal adjustment which it would be the objective of the Service to promote is perhaps worth probing:

The relations of individual students to one another – and of definable groups of students to one another – is a field of extreme importance of study. It sheds light at one time on the personality of the student involved, and on the character of the social process of the University. It is frequently the cause of and oftener the symptom of good or bad individual adjustment as the case may be.

But what did Seeley assume were the central norms of the university community against which the successful adjustment of individuals and groups in their relations with each other could be measured?

The university, Seeley wrote, should provide a liberal education that “truly liberates or sets free the creative possibilities of those fortunate to become its students”. The norm is not fascist or socialist. It is Liberal. He makes an analogy between the university and the Freudian ego:

There is an analogue here....between the role of intelligence in releasing the creative power of impulse in the individual....and the role of a University in society which similarly may release the creative power of elements in a culture.³⁸⁹

The university becomes the social ego or even superego in Seeley's imagination. He makes this clearer later in the memo where he writes that, “there was the sense of thrill and happiness that marks the process of developing insight and power and – through these – freedom”.³⁹⁰ The role of the psychological service is therefore, by another analogy, likened to that of the Freudian analyst who

³⁸⁸ Seeley, Memo: A Psychological Service for the University, Undated, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

³⁸⁹ Seeley, Memo: A Psychological Service for the University, Undated, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

³⁹⁰ Seeley, Memo: A Psychological Service for the University, Undated, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

assists in the process of liberation by providing psychological insight. He takes over the role of the parent and in this sense becomes, like the superego, a sort of conscience for the University and thereby for society as a whole:

The conclusion is that the task of the service is to facilitate the process of liberal education by using the techniques and insights of psychology.³⁹¹

Thus the goal of the psychological service for veterans was to be adjustment back from military hierarchy, and wartime chaos, to liberal society. Of course, Seeley was right that this must be the goal of any psychoanalysis taking place in a liberal society. And yet, such a society retains many of the qualities of the jungle insofar as it remains individualistic, capitalistic, productive, authoritarian, competitive, and exploitative. Indeed, the general aim of Seeley's efforts to outline an overarching policy framework for the Post-Hostilities period was to unify these processes under the concept of a humane consideration for the needs of individual soldiers. In various ways, Seeley articulated policies that might soften the blow of post-war disorientation. Seeley emphasized the needs of the soldier undergoing this transition for interpersonal relationships, for education and counselling, and for free creative work. If you stand back and look at the totality of Seeley's military memoranda, they do constitute a humane vision quite in contrast to conventional military models of authoritarian social organization, harsh discipline, and conformity. What is remarkable is that he was already capable of such psychological insight at this point in his life, when he was still so young and had very little formal education behind him. However, we might consider the fact that, though he had not had much formal education in psychology, he had already accumulated a lifetime of experience in the field by a very young age because his inner troubles enforced upon him processes of introspection that many people never have the need for.

Seeley had had enough of Army life once the war was over and he was eager to gain academic recognition of his psychological acumen. Despite how close Seeley had gotten by this point to political power, he decided he would turn down an offer to act as Chief of Staff for Paul Martin, the Minister of Health. Seeley wrote to Martin that he wanted to keep his feet in both the worlds of scholarship and "the world of practical issues and everyday affairs". If he were to accept Martin's offer, Seeley wrote, he would see his role as that of one whom:

...in order to perform adequately...must be careful not to lose track of the whole by immersing oneself in successive parts. This implies the necessity for at least a small staff to do necessary bits

³⁹¹ Seeley, Memo: A Psychological Service for the University, Undated, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

and pieces of research under the direction of some one person who is free enough to see the implications of these bits and pieces – for the larger designs and long term ends.³⁹²

This was precisely the role Seeley would later carve out for himself as Director of the Forest Hill Village Project and as Special Assistant to the President of York University. As for the job of Martin's Chief of Staff, however, Seeley obviously felt it was beneath him. He said in the letter, "the task had been conceived at a much lower level", than what he had hoped. So our story now follows Seeley back to U of C.

3. Pop Sociology

i) University of Chicago

Being married and having a baby did not change John R. Seeley's wandering ways. He was officially discharged from the Canadian Army on September 6th, 1945.³⁹³ Proudly bearing his "Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp" and his "War Medal 1939-1945"; Seeley his wife Margaret and their first son Michael crossed the border at Port Huron, Michigan en route for Chicago on September 22.³⁹⁴ There he would take up his studies at U of C toward a Ph. D. in Sociology. According to a letter of reference later written on Seeley's behalf by eminent American Sociologist David Riesman, who also got his start at the U of C, it took a little while for the Seeley's to find a place to live once they arrived in Chicago:

He lived in our house for a time when he was a graduate student and instructor at the University of Chicago; we were colleagues there in a joint undergraduate course in culture and personality.³⁹⁵

This interlude with the Riesmans would prove to be fortuitous for Seeley's career. Not only would Riesman serve as an intellectual mentor during Seeley's studies at U of C, he would also become a key collaborator on the Forest Hill Village Project who would help to raise it above provincial obscurity. With his highly attuned social antennae, Seeley was himself the embodiment of the other-directed type identified by Riesman as the prototypical character type of the age. The Wolff child in

³⁹² Seeley to Minister of Health Paul Martin, July 21, 1945, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

³⁹³ Re: Captain Herbert John Ronald Friedeberg Seeley, Library and Archives Canada, Access to Information, Privacy and Document Delivery Services Division, Personal Records Division, Reference PRA2010-06622/A1

³⁹⁴ By Way of Canada: US Records of Immigration Across the US-Canadian Border, 1895-1954 (St. Albans Lists) [www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2000/fall/US-Canada-immigration-records-1.html]

³⁹⁵ David Riesman to Murray Ross, November 20, 1959, Clara Thomas Archives and Special Collections, York University, John R Seeley Papers, 1954-1971, F0405, 1975 – 012/012.

Seeley must have smelled success in Riesman. In fact, Riesman was to become so famous that he was chosen as the first social scientist to ever appear on the cover of *Time* magazine in September of 1954.

David Riesman's book *The Lonely Crowd*, which has gone down in history as the best-selling pop sociology ever written, provided the template for Seeley's own foray into the genre, *Crestwood Heights*. Not only did Riesman visit Forest Hill as part of the Project to speak to Administrators, Teachers and Parents at the school, but he would also write the introduction for the New York based *Basic Books* edition of *Crestwood Heights* in order to increase sales in the American market. To get an introduction by Riesman for a sociological publication in the 1950s was quite a *coup* given that books like *The Lonely Crowd* were all the rage. Some other examples of pop sociology that were well known at the time might Vance Packard's, *The Hidden Persuaders*, Charles Wright Mills, *White Collar: The American Middle Classes*. Even Margaret Mead's works, such as *Coming of Age in Samoa*, or *Male and Female* published in 1949, might be classed in this genre. Mead may be worthy of mention here alongside Riesman because, though not of the Chicago school, she was also invited to speak to the teachers and parents of Forest Hill Village Collegiate during the Project. Unlike Riesman, however, whose personal connection to Seeley was close enough to warrant the visit, Mead eventually declined the invitation to appear because of other engagements.

There is ample evidence in Seeley's correspondence written around the time of the publication of *Crestwood Heights* that he was quite conscious of the way that his work was modeled on that of Riesman. For example, in the following letter to co-author Alex Sim, Seeley describes his attitude toward the writing of the book:

Now, I meant this to have about the same relation to reality as does, say *The Lonely Crowd* and not as, say, *1984* or *Brave New World*.³⁹⁶

In a similar vein, Seeley wrote to Dr. Marsh Jeanneret, head of the University of Toronto Press which published the Canadian edition of the book as follows:

I think parts of *Crestwood Heights* will be semi-popular and will receive the same kind of widespread distribution and comment as did *The Lonely Crowd*.³⁹⁷

³⁹⁶ Seeley to Sim, October 14th, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

³⁹⁷ Seeley to Head of University of Toronto Press, Marsh Jeanneret, August 16th 1955, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

Seeley might have been a little more frank here and admitted that it was his fervent wish that the book would be recognized as a pop sociology of the same rank as *The Lonely Crowd*. Even in random notes jotted down by Seeley on scraps of paper strewn amidst his collected memos and letters from the time of the Forest Hill Village Project there are some not so idle speculations on Riesman's themes. For example, in one note under the title, "Riesman's categories", Seeley writes, presumably with reference to the concern of the other-directed to be well liked, "Not only getting along with others but with oneself". This was perhaps more of a self-reflective moment than a theoretical one but, in any event, if it is not already apparent from these primary documents, we can at least point to the general impression of other authors like Hans Pols who would agree that Seeley modeled *Crestwood Heights* on Riesman's work:

Following the now well-known critique formulated by David Riesman in *The Lonely Crowd*, the investigators presented a rather damning diagnosis of the problematic middle classes. Riesman agreed with these authors and wrote the preface to their study.³⁹⁸

iii) Riesman and Fromm

It is one thing to note that Seeley was trying to ride the pop sociology bandwagon that was carrying forward the career of his mentor at U of C, but another to wonder what precipitated this whole intellectual trend in the first place? Scholars like Wini Breines have shown that these books have played a powerful role in defining our historical understanding of America in the early post-war era, but this does not explain why these books caught on at the time. Were they simply the response at the level of policy to the changing material conditions of post-war America? The idea that these works resonated in some way with their times is the standard sociological interpretation. This is articulated by respected contemporary sociologist, Todd Gitlin, in his introduction to the most recent edition of *The Lonely Crowd*:

Riesman and Yale University Press expected the book to sell "a few thousand copies as a reading in social science courses". Instead it caught on. Why? With unerring hindsight we can see that it sympathetically exposed the anxieties of a middle class that was rising with the post-war boom, suburbanizing, busy availing itself of upgraded homes, machines, and status, relieved to be done with the Depression and the war but baffled by cultural and psychological upheavals beneath the surface of everyday life.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁸ Hans Pols, "'Between the Laboratory, The School, and the Community': The Psychology of Human Development, 1916 – 1956", *Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health* Vol 19 No. 2 (Fall 2000), 33.

³⁹⁹ Todd Gitlin, "Foreword", in David Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), xiii.

Allan Bloom, another U of C intellectual of the time, suggests that these “cultural and psychological upheavals beneath the surface of everyday life”, were attributable to the “German Connection”. Rather than seeing it simply as a response to the material conditions of post-war America, Bloom sees it as the outer surface of an intellectual crisis in European culture the roots of which lay in the radically nihilistic philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche:

If only intellectual historians could be persuaded that the intellect has an effect on history, that, as Nietzsche said, “the greatest deeds are thoughts”, that, “the world revolves around the invention of new values, revolves silently”. Nietzsche was such an inventor, and we are still revolving around him, although rather squeakily. This is our scene, and the spectacle consists in how his views have been trivialized by democratic man desirous of tricking himself out in borrowed fancy...I got my first look at this scene at the midpoint of its development, when American university life was being revolutionized by German thought...When I came to the University of Chicago in the mid-forties, just after the war....There were two writers who dominated and generated real enthusiasm – Freud and Weber. Although it is even now insufficiently appreciated, Freud and Weber were both thinkers who were profoundly influenced by Nietzsche....Everyone knew that they were German thinkers, and that the professors teaching them were a mix of German refugees from Hitler and of Americans who had either studied in Germany prior to Hitler or who had learned from these émigré’s.⁴⁰⁰

Who were these Holocaust survivors and their protégé’s that brought Nietzsche to America according to Bloom? None other than Seeley’s mentor, David Riesman through his teacher Erich Fromm. Bloom makes the intriguing historical claim that this post-war influx of German thought into the United States was not so much a matter of infiltration as it was of appropriation. He goes so far as to claim that as part of the conquest of Germany in World War II, the United States brought back elements of German culture as so much booty. He even likens the American appropriation of the German philosophers to the ancient Roman assimilation of the Greek gods:

The great influence of a nation with a powerful intellectual life over less well endowed nations, even if the armies of the latter are very powerful, is not rare in human experience. The most obvious cases are the influence of Greece on Rome....⁴⁰¹

If one sets aside Bloom’s Hegelian assumptions about the priority of ideas over economics as the driving force of history, it is interesting to observe how he, as an eye-witness, follows the trail of the American conquest and cultural appropriation of Germany to U of C. Bloom makes reference to Woody Allen’s film *Zelig* in order to draw out the themes in Riesman’s work which he believes are traceable to the “German Connection”. It is interesting to see that Bloom also makes reference to the cameo role of Bruno Bettelheim, another of Seeley’s U of C mentors, in Allen’s film:

⁴⁰⁰ Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 148.

⁴⁰¹ Bloom, *Closing of the American Mind*, 152.

Woody Allen's comedy is nothing but a set of variations on the theme of the man who does not have a real 'self' or 'identity' and feels superior to the inauthentically self-satisfied people because he is conscious of his situation and at the same time inferior to them because they are adjusted. This borrowed psychology turns into a textbook in *Zelig*, which is the story of an 'other-directed' man, as opposed to an inner-directed man, terms popularized in the 1950s by David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* borrowed by him from his analyst, Erich Fromm, who himself absorbed them from a really serious thinker, Nietzsche's heir, Martin Heidegger. I was astounded to see how doctrinaire Woody Allen is, and how normal his way of looking at things - which has immediate roots in the most profound German philosophy - has become in the American entertainment market. One of the links between Germany and the United States, the psychologist Bruno Bettelheim, actually plays a cameo role in *Zelig*.⁴⁰²

It is true that Fromm was an important mentor to Riesman, but just as was the case between Fischer and Seeley it is not as clear that Fromm was in fact Riesman's analyst. Perhaps the fact that the Fromm/Riesman relationship also over-spilled the conventional expectations of psychoanalysis might say something about the general looseness of the conventions around early post-war psychoanalysis. In turn, this might help to excuse Seeley and Fischer for their transgressions. In fact, Riesman began his psychoanalytic tutelage under Fromm in the early 1940s:

Riesman agreed to undergo psychoanalysis with Fromm to please his mother, who was in analysis with the famous psychoanalyst Karen Horney....When Horney recommended Erich Fromm to Eleanor Riesman, David would fly or take the train on alternative weekends for two hour sessions with Fromm in Manhattan. The formal analysis was unconventional, often resembling a teacher/student rather than a psychoanalyst/patient relationship. The analysis continued for some years however, and was the beginning of a longstanding intellectual relationship and friendship....They maintained a close personal friendship and an extensive correspondence until Fromm's death in 1980.⁴⁰³

How like the similarly occasional, far-flung and intellectually oriented so-called psychoanalysis of John R. Seeley. One difference between the two partnerships was that Fromm was a trained lay analyst while Fischer was a medical doctor who was not a trained analyst at all. Now, Freud was supportive of lay analysis but he was certainly not as sympathetic to the unskilled practitioner, or quack. For his part, Fromm completed his Ph. D. in Sociology at the University of Heidelberg before undergoing his psychoanalytic training with Hans Sachs who was very close to Freud himself. Fromm then joined the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory as the resident psychoanalytic expert. The integration of sociological and psychoanalytical principles that was characteristic of Fromm's work, as well as that of the influential Frankfurt School, more generally, seemed to rub off on David Riesman, as he openly acknowledged in the preface to the second edition of *The Lonely Crowd*:

⁴⁰² Bloom, *Closing of the American Mind*, 144-145.

⁴⁰³ Niel McLaughlin, "'Critical Theory Meets America': Riesman, Fromm, and The Lonely Crowd", *The American Sociologist*, (Spring 2001), 12.

...our effort in *The Lonely Crowd* was to deal with an historical problem that was broader than genitality, though narrower than fate. Thus, we ourselves were in the tradition of the neo-Freudians, particularly Erich Fromm, with whom I had studied. Fromm's *Escape from Freedom* and *Man for Himself* were decisively influential models in the application of a socially oriented psychoanalytic characterology to problems of historical change.⁴⁰⁴

As proof of the life-transforming impact of Riesman's relationship with Fromm, one need only notice that when their relationship began, Riesman was working as a lawyer, but by the end of the decade, without even a degree in sociology, he was teaching the subject at U of C. His book, a triumph, was like a gift that he proffered his father figure, Erich Fromm. He makes explicit acknowledgment of Fromm's collaboration during the writing of *The Lonely Crowd* in this passage:

Among friends who read the manuscript or portions of it, I want to especially thank Lewis Dexter, Herman Finer, Erich Fromm, Everett Hughes, Nathan Leites, Evelyn T. Riesman, John R. Seeley, Milton Singer, M. Brewster Smith, and Martha Wolfenstein.⁴⁰⁵

Yes, he includes on his list of important collaborators, John R. Seeley himself. We can begin to see, at this point, just how close Riesman and Seeley were, and how their relationship is readily explicable in terms of the shared experience of the two men as Jewish intellectuals influenced by German culture and psychoanalysis. They were also similar as intellectuals who managed to make a name for themselves in the academic field of sociology without the conventional qualifications namely, a Ph. D. It is tempting to attribute this biographical similarity to a shared aristocratic sense of entitlement between the two friends. In a recently published history of Sociology at U of C entitled, *A Second Chicago School? The Development of Postwar American Sociology*, Riesman is referred to as the "scion of an old Philadelphia Jewish family and proud of its heritage of learning and professionalism".⁴⁰⁶ Though of course, his precise origins remain unclear, Seeley was also raised in a wealthy Jewish family in England with high social aspirations. It is almost as if this class of boy clings to the Elizabethan pretense that a man of leisure must not learn a trade, but should indulge his eclectic interests without concern for money or title.

Now, Fromm, unlike his upper class protégés Riesman and Seeley, was of middle class Jewish German parentage. His father was a wine trader and his family was full of orthodox Jews who dedicated themselves to the study of the Talmud. Perhaps because of his class, Fromm actually got his Ph. D., and had a much stronger interest in Marxist theory than either Riesman or Seeley. Yet

⁴⁰⁴ David Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd* (Yale University Press: New Haven, 2001), xiv.

⁴⁰⁵ Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd*, xxii.

⁴⁰⁶ Gary Alan Fine ed., *A Second Chicago School: The Development of Postwar American Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 233.

given the religious climate in which he was raised, Fromm did share a disdain for titles and other things that you have as opposed to things that you are. He raised this prejudice to the level of sociological theory in his concept of the “marketing character” which he saw as a sociological symptom of American capitalism. The typical American, according to Fromm, is mainly concerned with how “salable” he is rather than how happy or free. For individuals who might be typecast as such marketing types, “prestige, status, success, the fact that he is known to others as being a certain person, are a substitute for the genuine feeling of identity”.⁴⁰⁷ This idea has certainly resonated in post-war American popular culture in works like Arthur Miller’s 1949 play *Death of a Salesman* whose hero was so concerned with being well liked, or in the 1954 film *On The Waterfront* where Marlon Brando’s character gives his famous and forlorn, “I could have been a somebody” speech.

It is this characterological concept of the “marketing man” that Bloom suggests Riesman borrowed from Fromm and the Germanic intellectual tradition. Bloom suggests that Riesman basically re-packaged and popularized this idea as that of the other-directed type who gets lost in *The Lonely Crowd*. What seems to be central to the character of man in Modern times that runs through the writings of all these thinkers up to and including Riesman and Seeley, according to Bloom, is a hypersensitivity to social expectations, an anxiety about the need to conform and fit in. As we have already introduced, Bloom uses Woody Allen’s character Zelig to define this type:

Zelig is a man who literally becomes whoever or whatever is expected of him – a Republican when with the rich; a gangster when with Mafiosi; black, when with blacks....He is nothing in himself, just a collection of roles prescribed by others....Woody Allen’s comedy diagnoses our ills as stemming from value relativism, for which the cure is value positing. And his great strength is in depicting the self-conscious role-player, never quite at home in his role, interesting because he is trying so hard to be like the others, who are ridiculous because they are unaware of their emptiness”.⁴⁰⁸

In Allen’s film, Bruno Bettelheim confirms this diagnosis in his cameo appearance where he says of Zelig, “I myself feel that one would describe him as the ultimate conformist”.

Riesman himself defines the other-directed character in the *Lonely Crowd* as, “at once an analysis of the American and of contemporary man”.⁴⁰⁹ What Riesman sees as linked to the commonly discussed international features of modernity including “capitalism, industrialism and urbanization”, is that, “relations with the outer world and with one-self are mediated by the flow of mass

⁴⁰⁷ Mclaughlin, “Critical Theory Meets America”, 7.

⁴⁰⁸ Bloom, *Closing of the American Mind*, 145.

⁴⁰⁹ Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd*, 19.

communication”.⁴¹⁰ The social corollary to this intensified exposure to various media of communication, Riesman argues, is a requirement of “more socialized behavior both for success and for marital and personal adaptation”.⁴¹¹ Thus appears the other-directed type who Riesman describes as follows:

This mode of keeping in touch with others permits a close behavioural conformity, not through drill in behavior itself, as in the tradition-directed character, but rather through an exceptional sensitivity to the actions and wishes of others.... While all people want and need to be liked by some of the people some of the time, it is only the modern other-directed types who make this their chief source of direction and chief area of sensitivity. It is perhaps the insatiable force of this psychological need for approval that differentiates people of the metropolitan, American middle-class, whom we regard as other-directed, from very similar types that have appeared in capital cities among other classes in previous historical periods.⁴¹²

What is amazing about these descriptions by Fromm, Bloom, Riesman, and Woody Allen of the other-directed type is how they fit Seeley like a glove. The martyr who sacrifices himself for the sake of God becomes the impostor who sacrifices himself to social expectations. Seeley claimed to be psychoanalyst, a sociologist and a teacher because those roles were most likely to win admiration in his day. However, the rejection and abuse he suffered as a child left him with such feelings of inadequacy that he did not believe he could actually earn such a status by his own efforts. Therefore he went to great lengths to fake it. Indeed, even intuitive women like Beatrice Fischer or his wife Margaret sometimes mistook his eagerness to please for fraudulence. Yet, we should not be too quick to judge, for if Riesman was right, then we are all like Seeley.

ii) Bruno Bettelheim

Seeley also spent a lot of time with Bruno Bettelheim during his undergraduate years, and again during his incomplete doctoral program, 1945-1947. According to Seeley, he and his wife Margaret were invited to dinner at the Bettelheim's apartment in Chicago on a monthly basis. However, as would be the case in most of Seeley's relationships, a falling out was inevitable and this had already started to take shape in Chicago over the issue of Seeley's doctoral thesis. Bettelheim had wanted Seeley to take a research grant under his supervision for a book entitled, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait*, but by this time Seeley had already begun to feel that Bettelheim was too “dogmatic and dictatorial”. He refused to take the research fellowship and instead got involved in participant observation with gangs in the slums of Chicago. A fellow graduate student by the name of

⁴¹⁰ Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd*, 21.

⁴¹¹ Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd*, 21.

⁴¹² Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd*, 22.

Morris Janowitz got the grant to do the work with Bettelheim which led to the publication of the book and further collaboration between Janowitz and Bettelheim culminating in the 1964 publication of *Social Change and Prejudice*. Starting from his association with Bettelheim, Janowitz established a reputable scholarly career as a sociologist with an expertise on military culture. Seeley on the other hand, got mired down in his work with gangs, failing to produce anything of substance toward his doctorate.

Seeley said that in his work with the gangs of Chicago he engaged in “a constant Socratic questioning that led to habits of examining their [gang] lives and thought-ways and taken for granted apothegm’s of morality”.⁴¹³ However, one wonders if he did not get distracted from his academic focus by the temptations of a life of crime which he had long contemplated as we have seen in his letter to his brother Frank. He says that he only pretended to join the gang, and that he participated in the life of the street only as an observer. For example, in his interviews with me he suggested that he went along with the gang on “prostitution crawls” but only on the promise from gang members that “you don’t have to fuck nobody”.⁴¹⁴ Of course Seeley was married with little children at home at the time. In any event, as he himself admitted, he never wrote anything about his experiences with Chicago gang life in the forties.

There is documentary evidence of the lines of divide that Seeley claims had begun to emerge between himself and Bettelheim over the research grant for the *Professional Soldier*. While working on the Forest Hill Village Project, Seeley was invited by his mentor Bettelheim to review his book, *Love is not Enough*. In his review, Seeley identifies the “terrifying implications”, of Bettelheim’s educational theories. Love, Bettelheim suggests in the book, is a necessary but not sufficient condition of normal development. For example, the autistic child becomes ill according to Bettelheim even though his mother loves him and wants the best for him because she cannot fully hide the unconscious wish on her part for the death of her child. Seeley writes, “God, in this case the child, is not mocked”. Or, Seeley writes, “to cuddle the child because we wish to make him happy, strong and free, and because we know that this is the way to do it, is, in the absence of genuine and free-flowing love between us, is merely to invite in him the feeling that he is being used and manipulated”. These terrifying realities about the child’s vulnerabilities, and our responsibilities as parents for feelings we may not even be

⁴¹³ John R Seeley, “Social Structure and Personality Structure in a Small United States City”, University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center Burgess, Ernest W. Papers Addenda, 1910-1966, Box 18.

⁴¹⁴ Interviews with John R Seeley

aware of in our relations with our children lead to feelings of helplessness, says Seeley. Seeley concludes his review of *Love is Not Enough* by implicitly objecting to this sense of despair:

To those who can bear the shock, and let it nerve them the more for the search for a grain of hope in the bushel of despair, it is highly commended for the clarity and importance of its message.⁴¹⁵

Seeley's review of Bettelheim's book is significant for the light it sheds on the influence of his estranged mentor on the Forest Hill Village Project. For both Bettelheim and Seeley the only hope for a strategy with which to address the problem of parenting is psychoanalysis. As Seeley writes in the review, "short of universal psychoanalysis – what can parents, then, do?" Seeley, as Director of the Forest Hill Village Project, sees in Bettelheim's work as Director of the Orthogenic School at the U of C, a model for his own project:

The book suggests that in a controlled setting (such as the Orthogenic School), with a staff of incredibly high quality, with sufficiently large groups and alternate parent figures (as compared with the minute middle-class family) and with the genius and character of Bettelheim – with all these, a great deal (no one knows quite how much) can be done for these badly-disturbed children).⁴¹⁶

Thus, we might conclude by this point that Bettelheim's Orthogenic School laid the basis for the organizational strategy behind the Forest Hill Village Project, just as Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* would serve as a template for the writing of *Crestwood Heights*.

Though obviously Seeley was heavily indebted to Bettelheim intellectually, the rift between them that we might have detected in his critique of the negativity of *Love is Not Enough* had become a wider chasm by the time, in 1953, Seeley was invited by Bettelheim to comment on his work entitled *Symbolic Wounds: Puberty Rites and the Envious Male*. In the spirit of Freud, to whose memory the book is dedicated, Bettelheim turns his attention away from contemporary parenting issues to the anthropological implications of his clinical observations at the Orthogenic School.

As had been the case with Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd*, Bruno Bettelheim acknowledges "Jack Seeley" amongst the list of those who made "many helpful suggestions" in the process of writing the book.⁴¹⁷ It is certainly remarkable that Seeley was able to make it onto the list of credits in the works

⁴¹⁵ Book Review of *Love is not Enough*, Undated, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁴¹⁶ Book Review of *Love is not Enough*, Undated, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁴¹⁷ Bruno Bettelheim, *Symbolic Wounds Symbolic Wounds: Puberty Rites and the Envious Male* (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1954), 11-12.

of two such prominent American public intellectuals of the 1950s. It might be dismissed as projection on Seeley's own part when he objected to Bettelheim's:

...constant speculation about origins to which I have a long-standing aversion in terms of possibility and utility.⁴¹⁸

Presumably, Seeley is referring to Bettelheim's attraction to questions about the early roots of cultural phenomenon like religion. However, he goes on to say that it is a fascinating topic of speculation:

We cannot draw definitive conclusions about their origin by studying the characteristics they exhibit today. Still, there is hardly a more fascinating topic for speculation; our curiosity leads us to wonder what were the forms of man's first religious thoughts and rituals and what were the emotional needs they were meant to satisfy.⁴¹⁹

It is indeed tempting to read Seeley's personal confusion about his origins into his aversion to questions of religious origins. Being without a religious, moral, historical, or emotional core he was not inclined to seek it elsewhere. Seeley's reluctance to be pinned down in any way, extended in particular, as we know, to questions of authority of any type. His main objection to Bettelheim's theory of initiation rituals was its presumption in favour of their positive role in educational development because of their ancient origins. Bettelheim makes the following claim:

Throughout this book I have been guided by the belief that important enterprises of human beings, and certainly those that have continued for centuries to give satisfaction, must serve positive rather than negative ends.⁴²⁰

Bettelheim ends the book by saying that the traditional view of initiation rituals and circumcision in psychoanalytic and anthropological theory, "as imposed primarily by the elders on the young, against the will of the young", overlooks their health-promoting functions. In fact, he suggests initiation rituals like circumcision have always served a positive function; although, he also says that in light of advances in the scientific understanding of their nature there may be room to adjust them so that they can be even more successful in serving human needs. Amongst the positive functions of initiation rituals like circumcision, Bettelheim suggests, include the opportunity for youth to deal with their sexual role confusion. He observes that the blood letting involved in circumcision of the phallus enables boys to imitate menstruation, or in the case of subincision, to go so far as to refashion the phallus so that it can take on the look of a vulva without losing its masculine function. He articulates

⁴¹⁸ Seeley to Bruno Bettelheim, Jan 5th, 1953, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

⁴¹⁹ Bruno Bettelheim, *Symbolic Wounds*, 11-12.

⁴²⁰ Bettelheim, *Symbolic Wounds*, 255.

his general perspective on puberty rites in the following passage from the last chapter of *Symbolic Wounds*, entitled, “Envoy”:

I became ever more convinced that those rites are motivated not by a desire to break man’s autonomy and prevent his self-realization as an individual and as a member of his social group, but by exactly the opposite desire. Through the rites, young persons – indeed, all the people who participate – try to master not a man-made conflict between the old and the young but a conflict between man’s instinctual desires and the role he wished to play in society... They are efforts at self-realization; through them, man seeks to express and then free himself of his anxieties about his own sex and his wishes for experiences, organs and functions which are available only to persons of the other sex...

On a more human level, if we could satisfy through ritual, or through more civilized, less magic and more satisfying institutions, the desires of both men and women to participate in the activities of the other sex, each sex could gain greater inner autonomy, could better accept its own role and that of the other; the two could live with one another more satisfactorily.⁴²¹

For his part, Seeley declares that it is the inherent conservatism in Bettelheim’s theoretical perspective, seen here, that alarms him:

...at some point you say that you take it for granted that any long-standing institution must have constructive rather than destructive value, otherwise it would not have survived.⁴²²

This, Seeley says in his letter to Bettelheim about the book, is a “seriously dangerous doctrine”, that might lead to such conclusions as that:

....corporal punishment, capital punishment, torture, and the Catholic Church alike were more in the service of life than death. My feeling is that fascism failed to survive as a growing institution chiefly because of a rare historical accident in terms of a convergence of forces. If it had survived on your argument you would incline researches to look in it for the sense in which it served life rather than death, and while I think this should also be done, I think it would be a regrettable first bias with which to come to the investigation.⁴²³

This is an interesting exchange between two men who had in their own way suffered under fascist discrimination against Jews. Already, Seeley has identified the issue which he claims came between Bettelheim and himself in the long run, namely, pedagogical authoritarianism and its corollary, corporal punishment. Seeley was not the only one amongst the colleagues and students of Bettelheim’s who fell out with him over the reported abuse of his teacherly powers at the Orthogenic School. Indeed, given his own anger issues it was predictable that Seeley would want to distance

⁴²¹ Bettelheim, *Symbolic Wounds*, 265.

⁴²² Seeley to Bettelheim, January 5, 1953, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

⁴²³ Seeley to Bettelheim, January 5th, 1953, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

himself from Bettleheim as part of his general efforts at compensation. However, it is hard to avoid the interpretation that both men were struggling in their own way with their internalization of the behaviour of the Nazi guards.

v) Everett Hughes

We now turn to the question of why Seeley did not complete his Ph. D. program at U of C. He had turned down an impressive posting as Chief of Staff to a federal cabinet minister in Ottawa to pursue this academic program after all. Admittedly Ph. D's are interminable programs by their very nature. Perhaps Seeley saw the opportunity to get away without having one in the example of Riesman, but it is strange that he did not finish given the evidence that he did not discourage it when others unknowingly applied this title to him. This question is dealt with in the correspondence that was exchanged between Seeley and the Head of the Sociology Department at U of C, Everett Hughes. It was Hughes, in fact, who raised the question in a casual letter to Seeley in October of 1958, when Seeley was still basking in the academic limelight with the recent publication of *Crestwood Heights* in 1956:

Earl Johnston just asked me why you aren't a doctor. Of course it is just a matter of time until you will be an honorary one. But I couldn't answer his question. Let me ask you why you aren't a doctor?⁴²⁴

By this time Seeley had finished the Forest Hill Village Project, and was bouncing around, as usual, between another community study research project in Indianapolis, and a position as Research Director at the Alcoholism Research Foundation back in Toronto. Seeing an opportunity in Hughes question, Seeley sent a lengthy reply offering all sorts of excuses for the incomplete thesis, all of which boiled down to putting the blame mainly on the shoulders of others. First, Seeley admits in the letter to Hughes that he left Chicago to join the Canadian Mental Health program with both the comprehensive exams and thesis incomplete. He does not give a reason as to why he did this, but he suggests that he planned to complete them by working on them "in the evenings". However, he goes on to argue that he was forced by his personal success at the CMHA into building such an "empire" around the Forest Hill Village Project that it was impossible to balance this commitment with the progress of his work on his exams and thesis. He points the finger at his colleagues on the Forest Hill Village Project, Tom Mallinson and Alex Sims, whom he says did not do their part in the writing up of *Crestwood Heights*. Seeley claims that with the thesis hanging over his head, this surplus of

⁴²⁴ Hughes to Seeley, October 16th, 1958, University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center, Hughes, Everett Cherrington Papers, 1910-1966, Box 57.

responsibilities he was forced to assume as Director of the Forest Hill Village Project was just too much to bear. He says that he broke down under the pressure and went into psychoanalysis. This mental breakdown led to the crumbling of his plans to finish the thesis:

I think I would have ploughed through, except for an unfortunate success. The ideas and plans we had been hatching caught fire too soon, and before we knew it we had the gigantic “Forest Hill Village Project” on our hands, and it was simultaneously shifted to University auspices. I thus found myself training psychiatrists, teaching teachers, instructing sociologists in the making and running of an empire bigger than some departments.

The crux came when it was time to write the two books: one on the Human Relations Classes, one on the Village itself. The psychologist responsible for the former couldn’t write, though I had done nearly everything else for him, and he got his Ph. D. out of my experiment. Alex Sim couldn’t manage the “Anthropology” and, under threat of collapse of that enterprise I had to take over – to write the greater part and supervise, rewrite and edit all of what became *Crestwood Heights*. Under these external pressures (plus whatever was ‘inside’) I began to develop acute anxieties, and went into analysis. This was beyond our income, and in order to recoup financially I had to accept, I felt, the three-year job in Indiannapolis. On my return, I resumed the analysis.⁴²⁵

Now we happen to know that, based on the evidence of Beatrice Fischer’s testimony, Seeley never did in fact pay for his so-called analysis, so at least this part of the story is economical with the truth. Whenever someone shifts the blame, as Seeley does here to Mallinson and Sim, it is also always suspicious. In fact, the truth was very much the reverse of what Seeley claims as we shall see in more detail later. Indeed, it was Mallinson who produced the only piece of writing on the Human Relations Classes in the form of his Ph. D. thesis, which he finished; and it was Sim who wrote the most substantial part of *Crestwood Heights*. Indeed, from some quarters, it was Sim’s part of the book that met with the most critical acclaim.

It is here, in these unwarranted attacks on others, that we might sense the spilling out into reality of Seeley’s anger issues. This mean-streak repeatedly cost him friends and colleagues. What also emerges as true from Seeley’s account is that part of his problem was that he suffered from the common tendency in our culture to overextend oneself. This was a reflection of the other-directedness of Seeley’s character, which of course, Riesman had perceptively observed:

There have been times when I have felt that Jack Seeley was almost too sensitive and responsive a human being to cut himself off from some of the demands on his time that students and colleagues make because of this quality, and that therefore his research enterprises would suffer.⁴²⁶

⁴²⁵ Seeley to Hughes, October 20th, 1958, University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center, Hughes, Everett Cherrington Papers, 1910-1966, Box 57.

⁴²⁶ Riesman Reference for Seeley addressed to Murray Ross, November 20, 1959, Clara Thomas Archives and Special Collections, York University, John R Seeley Papers, 1954-1971, F0405, 1975 – 012/002.

One may even speculate that Riesman got his idea for the concept of the other-directed character type from observing the behavior of his friend John R Seeley. From a Marxist perspective, we might speculate that such anxiety about one's value to others is aggravated by a capitalist society which conflates personal worth with productivity, and achievement with signs of visible status in some corporate hierarchy. In a more psychological sense, we might easily imagine that at an unconscious level Seeley may have felt that, failing such over-achievement, he had no reason to expect appreciation from others just for being part of the group. His family certainly did not value him just for who he was. In a remarkable passage from the correspondence with Hughes, Seeley himself seems to recognize the link between his childhood and adult feelings of inadequacy:

Yes, I would like to be made, even so late, an honest husband to that wench, research. It has been a hard thing to bear and reconcile the immense (if not excessive) respect I have received in high places and low, among the theoretically oriented and the practically, with the gnawing, nagging feeling that I had not been 'legitimated'. I told myself it didn't matter, but it does: twice over, perhaps, because I was actually an illegitimate child in a very Victorian large family, and was never allowed to forget it. It may be for this very reason that I have put off confronting the 'rite of passage' for so long.⁴²⁷

Victorian? This passage is an example of how Seeley avoided the reality of his Jewish heritage when speaking of his past. But perhaps the more immediate question raised here is whether Seeley really wanted to turn his attention to completing his studies toward his Ph. D. in 1958, or whether he was hoping that he could just pull a bureaucratic maneuver to have it conferred without ever really going through the requisite research and writing process involved in writing comprehensive exams and a thesis. Seeley lists all his publications in the letters to Hughes, perhaps in the hope that by themselves these collected works, and especially *Crestwood Heights*, might be accepted on their own terms as enough to warrant being granted the Ph. D. However, he acknowledges they may not be:

How to turn from these enterprises – and the new ones I am embarked on here – to attend properly to a formal dissertation, I do not know. I have a feeling of a task uncompleted, and of having, 'let you down', since you sponsored me so generously both at Chicago and since. I hope to have a volume of papers on alcoholism published by U of T Press – but it's no dissertation. I do not think I have been 'unproductive'; I have simply not been free – mostly externally, somewhat internally, to produce the document required to prove the 'research competence', I believe I have, and have in different fashion, shown.

Do you have – as you so often have had - good counsel for me?⁴²⁸

⁴²⁷ Seeley to Hughes, October 20th, 1958, University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center, Hughes, Everett Cherrington Papers, 1910-1966, Box 57.

⁴²⁸ Seeley to Hughes, October 20th, 1958, University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center, Hughes, Everett Cherrington Papers, 1910-1966, Box 57.

In fact, Hughes does follow through very graciously on behalf of Seeley with his colleagues in the Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago. He got so far as to be able to offer Seeley the chance to organize his works into a coherent whole that he might claim as his own work, and submit this for consideration by the Department as a Ph.D. thesis. The problem, Hughes pointed out, was that *Crestwood Heights* was a co-authored work which could not be considered original. Seeley responded to Hughes that he simply did not have the time to pull together the various strands of his work as required:

I don't think the problem is primarily capacity, or self-discipline, or productivity as such. What I can do, under present circumstances is turn out a large amount of publishable material provided no one piece takes more than three working days or two consecutive week-ends.⁴²⁹

Seeley does not seem to even consider the more long-term, hard slogging approach of just working away at the job until it's done. But such patient persistence is the part of scholarly work that did not seem to appeal to the more politically-inclined Seeley. It would seem that the preparation of a weekly sermon or political speech would have suited Seeley better, and in fact, most of his writing was in fact of this nature, being typically long on rhetoric and light on research. After all, in his correspondence with Hughes, Seeley did refer in pejorative terms to scholarly research as a "wench". In any event, Seeley never did follow through on Hughes offer. Having discovered that some work would be involved, he left the matter to some vague future prospect of arranging his working life so that he would have more time to write:

....to do something that requires at least a long hard look and an adequate continuous period of preparation and execution – requires either an alteration in my circumstances or in the way I organize my life (or fail to). I am inclined to see about the former, first. With this in mind, I am dickering both at Toronto and Harvard for something that might give me more of a blank check in disposing of my own time than I now have – or have ever had, except for the all-too-brief years at Chicago.⁴³⁰

Having the time to research and write never actually materialized in Seeley's career despite his consistent plea that this was his real heartfelt desire. Much as had been the case when he was a graduate student at Chicago, when the opportunity for serious research and writing was at hand, he consistently turned to the more action-oriented life of a gang member. Whether it was an illegal street gang, or a faculty movement conspiring to overthrow a university administration at York University or Brandeis, Seeley found himself time and again in a position of political struggle rather

⁴²⁹ Seeley to Hughes, January 14, 1959, University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center, Hughes, Everett Cherrington Papers, 1910-1966, Box 57.

⁴³⁰ Letter from Seeley to Hughes, January 14, 1959, University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center, Hughes, Everett Cherrington Papers, 1910-1966, Box 57.

than quiet reflection. It would seem that his historical quest for justice, or perhaps vengeance, was a deeper source of motivation in his life than his intellectual commitments. Yet, he himself did not fully recognize this as we can see in a letter to Hughes written much later, in 1970, by which time the Ph. D. issue had long been left unresolved. In the following revealing passage, Seeley himself searches for the meaning of his own actions:

....what I would like to understand, if you can help me, is what I do or don't do that makes it bad for me and others to administer. (Not that I think that that is my best work; I think my best is research and writing, especially theorizing)...

It is surprising that he could be so wrong about himself. The evidence would suggest the reverse was the case, unless Seeley was so fearful of being found out as an academic fraud, that he avoided ever putting himself to the test. Sadly, the failure of Seeley to follow through on Everett Hughes invitation to complete his doctorate at U of C combined with the embarrassment to Hughes, led to the breakdown of their relationship as well. They finally fell out over Seeley's resentment at Hughes' refusal to recommend him for an administrative position as already hinted at in the passage from the letters above. In response to a letter from Seeley requesting a reference letter in 1970, Hughes responded:

My answer is going to be one with qualifications. I have known and greatly admired you, your talents and your work since you turned up in Chicago in 1940. Your work in Indiannapolis and Toronto are both outstanding, and I know how imaginative and insightful you are. Against this, I have to weigh my judgment of how you played the role of Department Chairman, and as handler of human and organizational matters....

I think it comes to this: that I will gladly recommend you as a teacher and an intellectual of great intelligence and human feeling. But I will do so only if it is clearly understood that the position for which I am recommending you has no administrative duties, major or minor.⁴³¹

Seeley never forgave Hughes for this qualification which may very well have served Seeley's own best interests if he had been more self-aware. He claims in a letter written much later, in 1982, at the age of seventy, that, despite his own efforts to help Hughes, "...to ensure the extension of your teaching contracts and to secure for you a just salary", Hughes had betrayed him by refusing to give him a reference for an administrative position:

⁴³¹ Seeley to Hughes, December 15, 1970, University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center, Hughes, Everett Cherrington Papers, 1910-1966, Box 57

How sad that your last letter to me should say, in effect, that you would be willing to recommend me for a teaching job but not for anything that involved university administration. Next year, I shall be seventy. I do not want to go to my grave with so blank an understanding or so deep a wound after so long a friendship.⁴³²

There is no record of any reply from Hughes to Seeley's complaint. The only happy ending to this sideline in the history of the Forest Hill Village Project is that a Ph. D. was finally conferred upon Seeley in 1975 by the International College of Los Angeles, an unorthodox Californian tutorial institution, where he had served as a tutor and associate dean of the Faculty and Guild of Tutors from 1973 onward. The question this event leaves us with is why Seeley eventually settled for a questionable degree from an obscure institution and let pass the opportunity to legitimize his academic career at U of C.

vi) Ohio

While the inspiration for the Forest Hill Village Project may be traced back to the conversations amongst the staff of the Directorate of Personnel Selection in the Canadian Army during World War II, the first stage of planning for the project might be located in the outline of an incomplete doctoral thesis that Seeley managed to submit at U of C entitled, "Social Structure and Personality in a Small United States City", found amongst the archived papers of Professor Ernest Burgess. It is interesting to point out here that despite his failure to complete the Ph. D., Seeley was considered by Burgess, who was then acting Chair of the Sociology Department, for a tenured appointment in Social Psychology at U of C.⁴³³ It is also interesting to notice that the existence of this essay amongst Burgess' papers, would suggest that Seeley did indeed attempt to combine working on his Ph. D. thesis with the jobs he took not long after commencing his Ph. D. program. He explains this in the correspondence with Everett Hughes:

Only the thesis and final exams stood in the way when I left Chicago to join the ⁴³⁴Canadian Mental Health Association. With them I had a sensible bargain; after a year's work I was to have six months off to do the dissertation for which I had data. In the first six months there I planned for them, and also worked evenings on my data – long enough to find out that a) the results would be ambiguous,

⁴³² Seeley to Hughes, October 11, 1982, University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center, Hughes, Everett Cherrington Papers, 1910-1966, Box 57.

⁴³³ Fine ed., *A Second Chicago School*, 228.

⁴³⁴ A. R. Mangus & John R. Seeley, "Mental Health in a Rural and Semi-Rural Area of Ohio", Columbus Ohio, Feb 1950, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

and b) that the questions I was asking were childish, not because I had framed them ill, but because most of the key terms in the mental health field would not bear a second examination.⁴³⁵

The data referred to in the letter must be that which Seeley collected as part of his research work on a mental health project in Ohio that was entitled, “Mental Health in a Rural and Semi-Rural Area of Ohio”. According to his *curriculum vitae*, Seeley began work as a Field Research Director at Ohio State University in 1946 on this project only one year after commencing his Doctoral Program during which time he had, according to his recollections, spent as much time with the gangs of Chicago as he did in class. In interviews with me, Seeley referred to the Ohio study as a precursor to the Forest Hill Village Project, though it was just a survey, as he pointed out. It did not have the ambition to include any kind of therapeutic intervention as did the Forest Hill Village Project.

The Ohio study was written at a time that a distinction was still being made in America between “whites” and “negroes”. Such social classification on the basis of race, however, was in the midst of a transition toward a classification system based on health. Of course, this transition should not necessarily be taken as progress from Darwinian classification schemes that seek to distinguish superior races and those deemed more primitive. Under a normative regime based on health, what matters to determine one’s rank is the extent to which one is a good fit in a particular community. We can see this quite clearly in the surprisingly naïve definition of normality adopted in the Ohio study:

good social adjustment...the person who lives easily and comfortably with other normal persons whose behaviour does not differ greatly from those of others in ways of which they disapprove and who is personally happy and socially useful.⁴³⁶

The report stresses the high incidence of personality disorder amongst the population using this standard for measurement, all of whom the report claims would benefit from, “mental hygiene counseling services provided by psychiatrists and other professional counsellors”.⁴³⁷ To determine their numbers they used stats from the military investigation of potential recruits during World War II and data from schools. These results showed that “superior personal and social adjustment and superior intelligence tend to go together”. Also, they showed that “early detection and institutionalization of the feeble-minded and the psychotic (or those about to become psychotic) would undoubtedly reduce crime rates substantially”. The study also emphasizes the economic losses in

⁴³⁵ Seeley to Hughes, October 20, 1958 University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center, Hughes, Everett Cherrington Papers, 1910-1966, Box 57.

⁴³⁶ A. R. Mangus & John R. Seeley, “Mental Health in a Rural and Semi-Rural Area of Ohio”, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁴³⁷ A. R. Mangus & John R. Seeley, “Mental Health in a Rural and Semi-Rural Area of Ohio”, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

terms of working hours and “efficiency” that are caused by mental health issues. The study concludes by listing the kinds of psychiatric services that should be organized to treat and prevent the spread of these mental health issues, namely, guidance clinics in schools, special education services, and training programs for mental hygiene principles to be applied in classrooms.

We can see how the Ohio study anticipates the political agenda behind the Forest Hill Village Project in its use of the collection of mental health data to justify the expansion of a market for the pedaling of psychological expertise in schools, prisons and hospital clinics. Indeed, the Forest Hill Village Project provided a test case in the implementation of psychiatric clinics in schools and mental health training for teachers as recommended in the Ohio Study. At the level of policy, there is also continuity in the themes of the Forest Hill Village Project “anthropology”, as Seeley sometimes referred to *Crestwood Heights*, with those Seeley had begun to articulate in his paper, “Social Structure and Personality in a Small United States City”. In his analysis of the culture of a small town in Ohio, Seeley emphasized the importance of what he alternately called the gossip-web or the esteem order as the primary mechanism of social control:

We might summarize what has been said by describing the gossip-web as constituting a pervasive, coercive, evaluative and highly structured order. It is submitted that it is this order....that not only permits us to speak of but actually constitutes the community.⁴³⁸

This emphasis on how one is perceived within an Ohio community, Seeley argues, is not exclusively based on one’s class or official rank, but rather on a more subtle index of the extent to which one might claim to be “well-liked”, to borrow Arthur Miller’s phrase from *Death of a Salesman*. Such popularity indices are all-powerful according to Seeley:

This general sense of the worth or value of the person is a reality alike to the person judged and the person judging himself or others. It is, moreover, the most important determiner of life-chances, and hence of the entire way of life.⁴³⁹

Obviously, this perception of the importance of the esteem order according to Seeley builds on Riesman’s theme of other-directedness in post-war culture. It is carried through in the similar emphasis in *Crestwood Heights* on the importance of “success values” in Forest Hill such as personal achievement and material accumulation. Moreover, anticipating the focus in the Forest Hill Village Project on inter-disciplinary research in the fields of sociology and psychology, Seeley suggests that

⁴³⁸ John R. Seeley, “Social Structure and Personality Structure in a Small United States City”, University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center, Burgess, Ernest Watson Papers Addenda, 1910-1966, Box 18

⁴³⁹ John R. Seeley, “Social Structure and Personality in a Small United States City”, University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center, Burgess, Ernest Watson Papers Addenda, 1910-1966, Box 18.

the personality structure of individuals in a particular community are to a large extent shaped by their status in the “esteem order”. For example, people who live in more affluent communities will tend to breed what might be referred to as aggressive achievement-oriented individuals, according to Seeley:

In the upper group, the absence of withdrawing symptoms has more importance than in the middle group, but less than in the lowest. Manners have become somewhat less important than they are in the middle group, but the sense of personal freedom, the sense of belonging, and the conventional morals category have all assumed the highest import.

In the absence of a careful definition of the terms used in this passage by Seeley because his paper is very short and undeveloped, it may be possible to read into the emphasis on an “absence of withdrawing symptoms” an implication that a higher value is placed upon a more gregarious, and aggressive demeanor amongst “the higher group”. One might also suggest that the emphasis on “personal freedom” suggests a value placed upon being a person of means as the English gentry might have said it. In this sense the term freedom might be seen as a euphemism for wealth and power.

4. Empire

i) Mental Health for Canada

It is hard to detect the repressive undercurrents in the planning of the Forest Hill Village Project. On the surface it seemed to be such a noble project designed to prevent the terrible consequences of mental illness in our children and our society as a whole. The interpretation of the leaders of the Canadian National Committee on Mental Health was that the war had been the result of mental illness and the only way to avert the recurrence of such a disaster would be to make fast progress in the way of a cure for this disease. In the era when Freudian discourse was at the height of its influence, mental illness was seen by the CNCMH as a social disease, not a physiological one. The cure would therefore have to be executable by social means. Indeed, in *Crestwood Heights* Seeley suggested that the “hope of amelioration” which guided the project gave it the character of an experiment in “social therapy”.⁴⁴⁰ This led un-avoidably to a focus on schools as the only point of access for social medicine to the majority of children in Ontario. Indeed, if the mental health movement had any hope to prevent, or possibly reverse, this social disease before it spread too deeply into the collective personality of Canada’s children, access to schools would be a necessary condition of success. This policy was stated explicitly in the planning documents for the Forest Hill

⁴⁴⁰ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 14.

Village Project, first presented by Seeley in his new role as Executive Officer for the CNCMH to the Board of Directors on October 17th, 1947 in Ottawa:

The school is chosen because of its accessibility for such a program, because of the compatibility of the goals of the educator and mental hygienist, because of the central and influential place of the school in any community, and because of the need to concentrate, but not exclusively on the child".⁴⁴¹

The importance of the school as a point of entry to the child was also emphasized in *Crestwood Heights*:

The *Crestwood Heights* Project was one whose planning was focused on the child and therefore on the public school through which he could most easily be reached.⁴⁴²

For the CNCMH in collaboration with the Department of Psychiatry of U of T to devote attention and resources to a mental health project in the schools of Ontario in the early post-war era does seem strikingly far-sighted and socially progressive. However, there is also an almost predatory quality to this zeroing in on schools as the easiest way of getting at children.

At first sight it would seem that Seeley got involved again in the CNCMH with his erstwhile military colleagues quite innocently as a way to make some money while attempting to complete his doctoral dissertation. As he reminisced to Everett Hughes in a letter which we have already consulted:

Only the thesis and final exams stood in the way when I left Chicago to join the Canadian Mental Health Association. With them I had a sensible bargain: after a year's work I was to have six months off to do the dissertation for which I had data. In the first six months there I planned for them, and also worked evenings on my data.⁴⁴³

Though this did seem sensible but in the next breadth Seeley described the Forest Hill Village Project as his empire:

The ideas and plans we had been hatching caught fire too soon, and before we knew it we had the gigantic "Forest Hill Village Project" on our hands, and it was simultaneously shifted to University

⁴⁴¹ John R. Seeley, "Mental Health for Canada", October 1947, Library and Archives Canada, , Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

⁴⁴² Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 13.

⁴⁴³ Seeley to Everett Hughes, October 20th, 1958 University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center, Hughes, Everett Cherrington Papers, 1910-1966, Box 57

auspices. I thus found myself training psychiatrists, teaching teachers, instructing sociologists-in-the-making and running an ‘empire’ bigger than some departments.⁴⁴⁴

As we know, all of this explanation was by way of an excuse for not completing his doctoral work, although at the same time it would seem that what he was really saying was that he did not need to do so anyway because he was already commanding the equivalent of an academic department without it.

Whatever his motivations, Seeley can lay claim to having articulated a visionary mental health policy in the planning document entitled, “Mental Health for Canada”, which he wrote up while acting as Executive Officer and Director of Sociological Research, as he was sometimes referred to in the documents, for the CNCMH in 1947. He first presented this document to the Board of Directors of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene at their meeting in Montreal on October 17th, 1947. He sat alongside Dr. Hincks and Dr. Griffin at this meeting to present his plan for the “psychological sanitization of the schools”, which had emerged as a priority for the CNCMH in the immediate post-war period.⁴⁴⁵ According to Seeley, as much as he was entrusted with the role of policy planner with the CNCMH, another part of his early role with the Committee was to “keep close tabs on Clare Hincks to ensure that he didn’t say anything untoward”.⁴⁴⁶ His boss was well known for his personal psychological volatility. In the minutes of the meeting of the Board, “Dr. Seeley’s” presentation of “Mental Health for Canada” is recorded as having been, “a focus of excitement and interest by the Committee”.⁴⁴⁷ The planning document, “Mental Health for Canada”, pre-dated the arrangements with the Forest Hill Village School Board for its implementation as a pilot project. It therefore made no mention of any particular school system but was aimed toward the educational system in Canada more generally. Since, however, “Mental Health for Canada” did provide the original “blueprint” for the planning of the Forest Hill Village Project; it is worth describing in some detail.

On the basis of an ambitious definition of the nature of mental health, the first part of the document presents a bleak overview of the state of Mental Health in Canada in the post-war period. Indeed, one might even suggest that setting forward such high expectations for mental health was designed to lead to precisely such pessimistic conclusions so that a massive social intervention in the field of

⁴⁴⁴ Seeley to Everett Hughes, October 20th, 1958, University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center, Hughes, Everett Cherrington Papers, 1910-1966, Box 57.

⁴⁴⁵ CNCMH Priorities, 1947, Library and Archives Canada, Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

⁴⁴⁶ Interviews with John R. Seeley

⁴⁴⁷ Meeting Minutes, Board of Directors of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, October 17th, 1947, Library and Archives Canada, Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

mental health could be justified. Rather than adopt Freud's own, more modest, definition of mental health as the ability "to work and to love"; Seeley speaks in terms that were more likely to resonate with the American Dream. Seeley says that mental health is, "a condition where people are able to live up to the full limit of their potentialities".⁴⁴⁸ He includes within the ambit of those who suffer from mental disease not only the psychotic and the psychoneurotic, but also, "the person who is a constant prey to diffuse fear or anxiety, or the person who is the subject of chronic low-grade pain without any primary organic cause". Seeley even includes "those persons who have merely a persistent but vague emotional discomfort, who cannot get what there is to be had out of any situation, marital, business, social etc...".⁴⁴⁹ One always has the sense that Seeley drew the language of his policy statements out of his own personal experience and feeling.

As we might expect, the CNCMH relied heavily for its argument that a major mental health intervention was needed in Canada on the statistics gathered by the Directorate of Personnel Selection during the war regarding the numbers of the population who were unfit for duty because of mental defectiveness:

We know that in the late war some ten per cent of Canada's most vigorous, healthy age group was rejected for military service on account of psychiatric disability; and that after initial screening some 40% of those discharged for all medical reasons were actually discharged for psychiatric reasons.⁴⁵⁰

With the collection of this data, the work of the Directorate of Personnel Selection more than met its goal of creating a market for its services in civilian life after the war. Seeley was all they needed to make the selling job go over. Seeley also brought to bear the research data he had collected during the Ohio study in order to justify a focus not only on adult mental health, but also on the mental health of children. This move was important to justify the strategy recommended later in the document that to address the "epidemic" of mental disease facing Canadians an intervention in early childhood education was needed:

We know that there exist a great many emotional and behavior disorders, and a considerable amount of incipient neurosis and psychosis among children from the age of eight up. A most careful survey in a very good county in Ohio disclosed about one-fifth of the children maladjusted in the third grade, and slightly more than one-fifth in the sixth grade. Of the maladjusted, it was felt that at least

⁴⁴⁸ John R. Seeley, "Mental Health for Canada", October 1947, Library and Archives Canada, , Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

⁴⁴⁹ John R. Seeley, "Mental Health for Canada", October 1947, Library and Archives Canada, , Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

⁴⁵⁰ John R. Seeley, "Mental Health for Canada", October 1947, Library and Archives Canada, , Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

one-half were already in need of psychiatric help. The county in question is comparable with all but the very best non-urban counties in Canada. In urban areas, the rates are about the same.⁴⁵¹

The claims in this part of the document are of particular interest both in terms of the lack of any clear evidential justification for the conclusions offered, and in terms of the value judgment applied to communities. One wonders on what grounds the judgment of what might constitute a “very good”, or the “very best” non-urban counties is made? It would seem that goodness is here associated with mental health, but it also appears that mental health is lumped together with other un-named qualities which we might assume would have had something to do with class in the imagination of the author. Seeley might have been making the distinction here between the prosperous farming communities in Southern Ontario or Ohio and the rock-strewn impoverished farming communities, like Lorneville, to the North. If indeed there was such a tacit assumption of the association of mental health with class in the minds of Seeley and the leadership of the CNCMH, then we can begin to glimpse the darker side of the planning behind the Forest Hill Village Project. We begin to see here in the value systems within the context of which mental illness was understood in the post-war era, the sense in which its treatment might have been colored by the same sort of social control interests as had guided the activities of the CNCMH prior to the war.

The fact that mental health was considered not so much in terms of the personal mental suffering of individuals, but in terms of wider, and somewhat questionable social implications, is evident in the document’s focus on the economic and social costs of mental illness as a justification for the massive intervention in Canada’s education system. The list of the costs of mental illness which Seeley presents extends beyond the usual emphasis on hospital beds and crime to “homosexuality”, “pervasive industrial unrest”, and most surprisingly, “cults, the sooth-sayers, and mind-readers”.⁴⁵² Obviously, the latter were a threat to the claims to scientific legitimacy of psychoanalysis. As to the former, we have already seen in the historiography how the communist hysteria and the persecution of homosexuals served as symbolic outlets for post-war anxieties. Therefore, it would seem that the document “Mental Health for Canada” reflected the social and political concerns of its time and perhaps played its own part in shaping these concerns.

Seeley uses blatantly military terminology to introduce the conceptual framework of the Forest Hill Village Project as a plan for the “promotion” of mental health:

⁴⁵¹ JR. Seeley, “Mental Health for Canada”, October 1947, Library and Archives Canada, , Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

⁴⁵² JR. Seeley, “Mental Health for Canada”, October 1947, Library and Archives Canada, , Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

In the field of mental hygiene, as in any other medical field, three major tasks may be distinguished. The first task is therapy – the cure or alleviation of existing disease. This is attempted defense. The second task is prevention – taking steps to stem the increase of disease. This is a containing movement. The third task is the promotion of positive mental health. This is the attack...The plan proposed is one for the promotion of mental health...⁴⁵³

The use of military terminology in Seeley's schema may not only reflect the historical context of war but also the intent of the program. The Orwellian scale of the mental health intervention in schools across Canada that was conceived by Seeley and the CNCMH is another factor which may betray its underlying social control agenda. What was proposed was a national plan to educate a cadre of elite teachers over a period of ten years who would span out across Canada and act as "Liason Officers" in the "battle for mental health". Was the new metaphor of a war on mental illness being used as euphemistic camouflage for class warfare, the objective of which was to bring the incipient forces of social disorder in the immediate post-war era to heel?

It might be concluded that this interpretation is not too much of a stretch if one considers that the CNCMH plan for mental health programs in Canada's schools was suggesting a shifting of priorities in schools toward mental health promotion and away from education. It is also interesting to note in this context that according to the plan there were to be 10,000 male teachers, or "one teacher in every five now teaching", chosen to be trained to act as a vanguard of mental health liaison officers in schools across Canada:

These teachers are intended as leaven to the whole teaching profession...These men will be selected from teachers already outstandingly successful, particularly in their relation with children in the classroom.⁴⁵⁴

Such a masculine bias was to be expected at this time, but it also serves to confirm the patriarchal ambitions of the CNCMH.

The role of this elite, masculine vanguard would be to model mental health values and pedagogical methods in the schools. As Seeley put it, "The aim is to turn out practical social engineers". This corps of social engineers in the schools were also to serve as outreach officers for "Child Guidance Clinics" that were to be set up in every school according to the Plan. The principal task of these

⁴⁵³ JR. Seeley, "Mental Health for Canada", October 1947, Library and Archives Canada, , Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

⁴⁵⁴ JR. Seeley, "Mental Health for Canada", October 1947, Library and Archives Canada, , Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

guidance clinics was to be the “positive promotion of mental health”. In the military terminology adopted by the CNCMH for the description of the plan to promote mental health in Canada, the guidance clinics were to act as “redoubts from which the Liaison Officer and the Teacher carry on their battle for mental health”.⁴⁵⁵ The Head of Guidance in the school was thereby to be set up with at least competitive powers to that of the Principal according to the CNCMH plan.

It is interesting to remind ourselves at this point that historians of education in Canada have argued that, in fact, presently existing Guidance and Special Education Departments in Schools throughout Canada can trace their origins back to the work of the CNCMH:

Although vocational guidance was being offered at the Central Technical School in Toronto during the 1920s, the movement developed very little before 1940. In 1943, the Vocational Guidance Centre was established as a sub-division of the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene, and was later incorporated into the Ontario College of Education. The Guidance Branch of the Ontario Department of Education was established in 1944. A year later...Group guidance in Ontario was made compulsory in Grade 9 through a course called Occupations...During the 1940s the guidance movement spread across Canada from Ontario, and guidance directors had been appointed in several provinces by the end of the decade.⁴⁵⁶

According to one scholar, though this identification by Tomkins of the roots of guidance departments in the field of mental health promotion may have become increasingly covered over by the growth of competing interests in career planning and in the management of learning disabilities by departments of Special Education, its importance is revealed in the medicalization of the language of educators across Canada:

Tomkins creates a picture of a highly effective Canadian mental hygiene movement that introduced a number of social and educational measures into Canadian society. Special classes for subnormal children, sterilization, institutional confinement, educational testing or psychometrics to classify school pupils by intelligence, child guidance services such as school psychiatrists, the use of mental health counsellors, and the creation of a school guidance curriculum to encourage good mental health were all first advanced by the CNCMH. Tomkins believes mental hygiene acted to “medicalize the professional language of educators” and change the way they regarded children.⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁵⁵ JR. Seeley, “Mental Health for Canada”, October 1947, Library and Archives Canada, , Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

⁴⁵⁶ George S. Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum* (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1986), 185.

⁴⁵⁷ Gerald E. Thomson ““Not an Attempt to Coddle Children”: Dr. Charles Hegler Gundry and the Mental Hygiene Division of the Vancouver School Board, 1939-1969”. *Historical Studies in Education/Revue d'histoire de l'éducation* 14, 2 (2002), 247-78.

The question raised by this demonstration of the historical connection between the mental hygiene movement and the institutionalization of guidance and special education in Ontario is why the original mental health function of these departments seems to have gradually fallen by the wayside.

To return for now to the evidence of the ambitious scope of the original CNCMH plan described in “Mental Health for Canada”, it is significant to note that the plan conceived of ways to broaden the impact of a national mental health initiative beyond schools to the community at large. In addition to the training of liaison officers and the institutionalizing of mental health clinics in the schools, the plan sought to establish a research program on mental health promotion in which, “there would be bound together the resources of the clinics, the schools, the universities and other research bodies”. In this context, the plan also, tellingly, envisaged an increased role for private psychiatrists to meet the increased demand for psychiatric services. The plan also envisaged the establishment of “Local Mental Health Societies” and “Provincial Committees”, to act as a, “grass roots movement to bring the message of mental hygiene to the adult population, to assist in the collection of funds, to disseminate literature, to give broad-based public backing to the clinics, the liaison officers and the teachers”.⁴⁵⁸ At this level the plan envisaged a supporting role for governments as the key funding agencies:

The plan calls for the closest partnership between the Dominion Government, the nine Provincial Governments, the voluntary associations and the public....The Dominion would assist both by grants-in-aid to the Provinces and by direct grants to institutions and organizations for training, research, demonstration, etc....⁴⁵⁹

Where the authoritarian tendencies behind Seeley’s plan really come to the surface, however, is in the reaction to it from members of the Board of the CNCMH to whom it was presented by Seeley on October 17th, 1947. Strikingly, it was the remarks of Dr. Ewan Cameron from McGill University, who as we have seen was to become associated with CIA-funded psychiatric experimentation during the fifties, that were the most pointed. According to the minutes of the meeting:

⁴⁵⁸ John R. Seeley, “Mental Health for Canada”, October 1947, Library and Archives Canada, , Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

⁴⁵⁹ John R. Seeley, “Mental Health for Canada”, October 1947, Library and Archives Canada, , Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

He further commented on the present trend whereby people who were increasingly edgy, nervous and hostile organized themselves into Fascist groups. Dr. Hincks' plan really represented a plan against the disruption of our social structure.⁴⁶⁰

In Dr. Cameron's mind, the aims of mental health policy were clearly tied in with those of social control. It might be interesting to speculate about who he might have included as a fascist threat to social stability in Canada. Was Cameron simply referring back in time to the emergence of the Nazi party in Europe and to concerns that such a threat might re-emerge in North America even after the crushing defeat of Germany in 1945? Or, as is likely to have been the case given the communist hysteria at the time, was Cameron referring to the emerging power in the post-war era of communist parties in the Soviet Union, Cuba and Eastern Europe?

In any event, the plan Seeley presented to the Board of the CNCMH in October 1947 was given enthusiastic approval by the members who complimented Dr.'s Hincks, Griffin and Seeley on the "grandiosity", and, "statesmenlike", nature of the plan. Only one member of the Board, a Dr. Menckin, was astute enough to warn that the CNCMH should be wary of, "promising more than we can deliver".⁴⁶¹ However, given the spirit of unconquerability that characterized the early post-war period, Seeley went forward from the meeting with a broad mandate of approval from the National Committee.

ii) Toronto Board of Education

According to Seeley, the reason Forest Hill Village emerged as the site for a pilot project to test out the CNCMH's grand scheme was a fortuitous meeting of the minds. Seeley portrayed the agreement that emerged between the CNCMH and the Board of Education for the Forest Hill Village schools as a unique convergence of interests between enlightened social engineers at the national and local levels. As he wrote in a memo dated April 1948 under the title, "The Forest Hill Village Project of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, 1948-1949":

By a most unusual combination of circumstances, Forest Hill Village selected itself as the standard bearer for this high enterprise at the same moment that the National Committee has concluded that

⁴⁶⁰ Meeting Minutes, Board of Directors of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, October 17th, 1947, File I, Vol III, Library and Archives Canada, Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

⁴⁶¹ Meeting Minutes, Board of Directors of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, October 17th, 1947, File I, Vol III, Library and Archives Canada, Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

the Village was, on every ground, the logical choice for the first invitation to a partnership in the undertaking. Growing out of their everyday problems, the school administrators, teachers, Board of Education members and others in Forest Hill, had not only arrived at the same definition of the problem as had the National Committee, but had hit upon virtually the same solutions. The National Committee, on the other side, growing out of the needs of the project, had concluded that only a certain type of community and a certain type of school-system would be suitable for the project and that Forest Hill Village was that community and had that kind of school system. What was needed was a fairly compact community of adequate economic level to support such a program, and of sufficient enlightenment and understanding to appreciate its implications. What was needed in the school system was an unusually progressive body, flexible and bold, devoted to its children and able and willing to cope with, perhaps the most difficult problem in education. All these criteria characterized Forest Hill, and it was the unanimous first choice of the Committee and its advisors. At precisely that point, some of the Forest Hill staff and Board approached the National Committee and we discovered that we had both been thinking about one another.⁴⁶²

On the one hand, there was a certain amount of truth in Seeley's claim that there were progressive forces in Forest Hill open to the application of modern science in school programs. The fatherly Don Graham, Director of Education for the Forest Hill Village Schools, was a case in point. Graham was the son of a United Church Minister who was not used to wealth, unlike the majority of members of the community he came to serve in the "velvet ghetto" of Forest Hill. Yet, perhaps driven by the typical desire to succeed of the outsider, and by a deeply imbibed commitment to the Methodist belief in the improvability of mankind, Graham was not content to remain as just another history teacher. His semi-pastoral conception of his own role as Director of Education was captured in his contribution to the secondary school student handbook for 1947/48, the inaugural year of the Forest Hill Village Project, where he sought to inspire the student body:

May I commend to you an idea that will give your life meaning and purpose? During the last war the late President Roosevelt said, "We are inspired by a faith that goes back through the ages to the first chapter of the Book of Genesis – God created man in his own image". Thus we see that the greatest idea in history, the dignity and value of human personality, has its roots in our Hebrew-Christian tradition. Our democratic way of life, with all its imperfections, has for its basic tenet belief in the infinite worth of every individual. This idea is the basis of our Western Civilization, and our greatest achievements and reforms spring from it.

An eminent biologist, Leconte du Nouy advances the thesis in his book, "Human Destiny" that human dignity is the goal of evolution. Du Nouy defines the good as respect for personality; evil is contempt for it. This concept gives us a standard of right and wrong in all our relationships. Whatever crushes or besmirches personality is wrong; whatever helps it develop and flower is right.⁴⁶³

⁴⁶² Memo: The Forest Hill Village Project of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, 1948-1949, April 1948, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California.

⁴⁶³ Donald Graham, "A Great Idea", 1948, Student Handbook, Forest Hill Collegiate, Forest Hill Collegiate Library

The religious sense of his mission, which he undoubtedly carried forward from his father's example, is intermeshed here with norms taken from the biological and psychological sciences, like evolution and personality. This commitment to modern scientific discourse, and especially to the flowering of the individual personality, suggests a mind that could easily embrace the goals of the mental health movement. It is also interesting to note how careful Graham was to reconcile Jewish and Gentile identities, which must have been politically necessary for him in a community whose population was evenly split between these two groups. All of this in the name of the individual, demonstrating a modernist emphasis on subjectivity which is now held in contempt by Foucault amongst other post-modern writers, but which was taken for granted in post-war suburbs like Forest Hill.

We can see evidence in this passage that Graham's reputation with Seeley, Sim and the rest of the Forest Hill Village Project staff as a congenial, diplomatic type of personality dedicated to holding together seemingly irreconcilable positions, was well deserved. He was complimented time and again by Seeley and Sim for the equanimity with which he handled school issues. Sim wrote in retrospect that:

...Donald Graham, Director of Education at Forest Hill Village, more than anyone else opened the gates of the community and the doors of the school. At a good deal of professional risk, he took the first steps. Then in recurring crises, he mediated between the forces that were in conflict exhibiting rare diplomacy in maintaining both the community and school involvement in the project.⁴⁶⁴

An example of his conciliatory approach was the patience he showed with Seeley, at least on the surface. According to his son, Graham was always supportive of Seeley and preferred to give him a *carte blanche* in the management of the Forest Hill Village Project. Perhaps that was why he felt so disappointed with the critical tone of *Crestwood Heights* when it was published.

Alas, it wasn't all altruistic spirit and high purpose when it came to Graham's career. He took advantage of the lack of competition during wartime to achieve his rapid rise from history teacher to the top position in the administration of the Forest Hill Schools System. He also carefully cultivated relationships with Toronto establishment figures like Bill Line and Jack Griffin with whom he had become associated during the Regal Road Project prior to the war. According to Margery King, it was in fact Graham's networking with the leaders of the CNCMH that led to the Forest Hill Village Schools Board "selecting itself" as the site to test out Seeley's project, a move which certainly promised to reward Graham by placing another feather in his cap as a modern educational leader. It

⁴⁶⁴ Alex Sim, "The Person in the Process", The William Line Seminar, 1972, Toronto, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Archives, Fonds, 1918-1984 CAONOOO8

may even be testimony to Graham's ambitious nature that he managed to have himself identified as the driving force behind Seeley's project. However, according to the *Evening Telegram*, there was another version of the story. The newspaper reported that it was in fact Vernon Trott, the new Director of Guidance at the school who had sought out Seeley. If this was the case, perhaps Trott was seeking ways to legitimize the nascent field of guidance:

Two years ago last spring the National Committee for Mental Hygiene (now called the Canadian Mental Health Association) was studying the possibilities of caring for mental health in schools. So were some psychologists and psychiatrists at the University of Toronto. In Forest Hill it was a live subject. Largely because of the suggestions of Vernon Trott, Director of Guidance, Forest Hill asked the Mental Hygiene Group for assistance. So Forest Hill was chosen as the testing ground for an ambitious new mental health plan.⁴⁶⁵

In addition to the enlightened leadership of the schools in Forest Hill by Don Graham and Vernon Trott, there was another, more intangible, but nonetheless powerful communal force that drew its school system toward educational innovations like the Forest Hill Village Project. As was observed in *Crestwood Heights*:

....the school system of Crestwood Heights was co-existent with the establishment of the community itself, and has been largely responsible for the community's subsequent growth. School and neighborhood have evolved together. The reputation of the schools has been, and still remains, the magnet drawing residents to the area. In turn, the increasing population has necessitated the expansion of the schools from one original plant to five units: three elementary schools, a junior high school, and finally a collegiate. Qualitative improvements, in turn, attracted still more people, who would demand still better education to the community. At the present time, these units in combination form an educational system well known throughout Canada for its bold, progressive, and experimental orientation.⁴⁶⁶

In order to unpack this claim that it was the progressive nature of the schools of Forest Hill that drew people to the community, we might further explore the appeal of the qualitative improvements to the school system, and the composition of the increasing population that was so attracted.

The Forest Hill Village Project was begun in the same year that high school students moved into a new "ultra-modern" building. The new collegiate building was "officially opened in an impressive ceremony by Premier Leslie M. Frost", on September 24th, 1949.⁴⁶⁷ For the Tories, the new Forest Hill Collegiate was the signature achievement in their massive post-war program for building public schools that was designed to co-opt the then-popular social planning agenda of the Canadian

⁴⁶⁵ Bruce Byrnes, "Forest Hill Helps Boys, Girls to Solve their Mental Quirks", *Toronto Evening Telegram*, October 21, 1951

⁴⁶⁶ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 235.

⁴⁶⁷ *Toronto Evening Telegram*, September 25, 1949

Commonwealth Federation (CCF). It would seem that the appeal of the new school to the largely Jewish and upwardly mobile people who were migrating northward was its modernist façade. Eerily presaging Foucault's observations about the nature of surveillance in the modern prisons and school, the *Journal Civic Administration*, commented on how well lit the new school was:

Its 24 classrooms are painted in light, pleasing colors, while large windows and modern lighting fixtures afford the maximum in natural and artificial illumination.⁴⁶⁸

The subtitle of this same piece, "Newest Forest Hill Unit Has Complete Facilities for Intercommunication", provides further evidence of Foucault's thesis that discourse is tied up in movements of power and surveillance. The *Civic Administration* article has pictures of the Student Council President making an announcement over a new electrical sound system. Beneath the bright electric lights in the shape of flying saucers, a teacher is pictured speaking, presumably to the main office, on the new "internal dial telephone system".

While there were therefore powerful forces in Forest Hill that welcomed scientifically advanced educational experiments such as was proposed in Seeley's "Mental Health for Canada", there is also documentary evidence to suggest that there were more conservative forces in Forest Hill that were skeptical about the grand plan. That Seeley's portrayal of the agreement between the CNCMH and the Forest Hill Village School Board was somewhat idealized becomes apparent upon a reading of the rather subdued motion of endorsement for the CNCMH project as it passed the Forest Hill Schools Board Meeting of March 15th, 1948. According to the minutes of that meeting:

The Director of Education and the Principals of the Schools attended the meeting and also Dr. Clare Hincks, Director of the CNCMH and his associates Dr's Griffin, Line, and Seeley.

Dr. Hincks...asked for permission to use the schools as a laboratory for extending the work of the National Committee. Dr. Hincks' associates also addressed the Board explaining the work which they had in mind for the schools if permitted to use them as a laboratory for the Project.

That Dr. Hincks and his associates be advised that the Board would co-operate with the Committee for the use of the Village Schools as a laboratory with the understanding that the Board would not assume any financial responsibility, but that the Director of Education would work out an agreement with the CNCMH with respect to using the present teaching staff so that the equivalent of *one* teacher's time may be available to the Committee.

*Carried*⁴⁶⁹

⁴⁶⁸ K.S. Tisshaw, "'Ultra-Modern Village School': Newest Forest Hill Unit has Complete Facilities for Intercommunication", *Civic Administration* (February, 1950), 14.

This response of the Forest Hill Village Board of Education to the idea of their students serving as experimental subjects in a CNCMH laboratory was understandably guarded. It would seem that such an initiative was so out of the ordinary and unpredictable that the Board was reluctant to commit staff or financial resources. It is interesting to note that at this very same meeting, Vernon Trott was appointed as the new Guidance Head at Forest Hill Collegiate. This fact may verify the *Toronto Evening Telegram* report that it was Trott, not Graham, who had been the most influential Forest Hill figure involved in soliciting the CNCMH to make the new Collegiate the site for its educational experiment.

iii) Anti-Semitism in Forest Hill

The planning documents and meeting minutes from late 1948 for the Forest Hill Village Project suggest that Seeley and his colleagues were well aware that there may have been a certain level of sensitivity amongst people in the Village to the possibility of their being treated like laboratory rats in some psychological experiment. Perhaps, the growing Jewish population of Forest Hill was not completely blind to the dangers of modernism. On the one hand, they hoped that the benefits of a scientific educational system could help lift them out of social and economic marginality, and on the other, they were all too aware that the clinic held terrors of its own. The documents would suggest that their suspicions were justified. Surprisingly invasive new elements were introjected into the research project at the late stages in the planning process. These included a focus on research into anti-semitism in Forest Hill, and the surveying of the performance capacities of teachers and students that were not obviously related to the original aim of mental health promotion in the schools. These disturbing aspects of the Forest Hill Village Project emerged in tandem with two developments during the school year of 1948 and 1949 in the organization of the Project; the shift from a national plan to a local pilot project; and the shift from the CNCMH to the U of T Department of Psychiatry as the organizational base of the project. The devil is in the details, as they say.

The presence of the new Head of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital, Dr. Aldwyn Stokes alongside the Hincks, Griffin, Line and Seeley at a meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee of the CNCMH should be noted as we begin to confront some startling twists in the planning for the Forest Hill Village Project. As Seeley himself said, once Stokes arrived in Toronto he would regularly attend brainstorming sessions over dinner with the other leaders of the CNCMH. Stokes was therefore intimately involved in the early planning and organization of the Project. The Forest Hill Village

⁴⁶⁹ Minutes, Meeting of the Board of Education for the Village of Forest Hill, March 15, 1948, Toronto District School Board Archives

Project was obviously intended by Stokes as a way of distinguishing himself from his predecessors Farrar and Clarke through a more eclectic commitment to the integration of the social science and psychiatry, and the expansion of the purview of psychiatry beyond the asylum and into the community. Despite such liberal intentions on Stokes' part there still lurked in this approach the old eugenicist agenda of the Maudsley. However, instead of weeding out and sorting members of the population on the genetic bases of race, the new more acceptable measure, or Foucauldian norm, against which the population was to be measured, ranked and divided, was to be mental health.

The meaning of mental health promotion in the schools to the leadership of the CNCMH it turned out was not simply to ensure the well being of students and teachers in general, but rather, to punish and segregate those identified as mentally unhealthy. In regard to the education of teachers, the Scientific Advisory Committee of the CNCMH "carried" the following motion in regard to the training of teachers:

The Committee is also of the opinion that any effective program in the selection of candidates for teaching, or in the weeding out of mentally unhealthy candidates for teacher's certificates, is directly dependent on the extent to which the staff of the teacher training institution, and the Superintendent of Schools hold a mental hygiene point of view.⁴⁷⁰

The fact that this idea was not just a fantasy of the inner circle of the mental health movement, but had spread beyond into the educational world more generally in the immediate post-war era is revealed in the following excerpt from an article entitled "Education in Canada" published in the *History of Education Journal* in 1951:

The war also threw more intense light on the need for attention in education to mental health, but it was not until after the war that there was any noticeable expansion of activity in this field, at least as far as the schools are concerned. For the past few years, in Forest Hill Village, a suburb of Toronto, an attempt has been made, with the help of funds procured by the University of Toronto from the federal government to give training in mental health to a few teachers from all provinces of Canada. There is a growing realization everywhere that consideration of mental health should govern the selection of candidates for teaching when the number of applicants is sufficiently great to make selection possible.⁴⁷¹

Similarly, in regard to students in the High Schools, the ambition of mental hygienists was to weed out those students not suited for education, according to the Scientific Advisory Committee of the

⁴⁷⁰ Minutes, Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee (CNCMH) June, 21, 1948, Library and Archives Canada, Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

⁴⁷¹ Charles E. Phillips, "Education in Canada, 1939-46", *History of Education Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 1. Autumn, 1951 (7-13)

CNCMH, not because of “mental defectiveness” as was the case before the war, but because of their “mental ill-health”. The purpose of the training of teachers in mental hygiene would be so that they could:

....come to understand themselves and their reactions and improve their adjustments as well as to guide toward other occupations those students whose personality patterns and mental ill-health make them un-suitable for the work of the classroom.⁴⁷²

What is the reader to make of the designation “mental ill-health” that would render certain prospective teachers or students unfit for the classroom? Given the historical background of the leadership of the CNCMH in the Directorate of Personnel Selection in the Canadian Forces during World War II, it would seem that something along the lines of a comparison between the soldier who is deemed unfit for combat might be made to illuminate what was being suggested by the CNCMH in regard to the fitness of particular teachers or students. Would this mean that those without the proper levels of aggression and obedience to authority were too mentally ill to go to school? Or did the leaders think that standards should be reversed in peace time and it would rather be the typically psychopathic, aggressive soldier type, formally ideal for combat, but now useless in school who should be ostracized? Given what we know about the personality type of the soldier psychologists who led the Forest Hill Village Project, the latter case is unlikely.

“Dr. Seeley”, as he was referred to in the minutes from this meeting, indicating that by 1948 he was well on his way toward his career as an academic impostor, also made some strange remarks about the initial planning stages for the Forest Hill Village Project:

The activities undertaken in Forest Hill included a survey of what Dr. Seeley called the ‘levelling of the mental health in the village’ and an ‘exemplary demonstration for a year of the service recommended as desirable that is, the teaching of human relations in the classroom.’⁴⁷³

While it will become clear in ensuing chapters what “Dr.” Seeley meant here when he refers to the group psychotherapy analogue, called human relations classes, it is less clear what he might have meant by a survey of the “leveling” of mental health in Forest Hill. A more Foucauldian interpretation might suggest that this is what was sought by the project planners, or what they hoped

⁴⁷² Minutes, Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee (CNCMH) June, 21, 1948, Library and Archives Canada, Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

⁴⁷³ Minutes, Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee (CNCMH) June, 21, 1948, Library and Archives Canada, Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene [textual record] 1918-1949, MG28-I391, R3858-2-G-E, File 435-5-16.

for, in the sense that the determining sign of a mentally healthy community from their point of view would be one characterized by conformity to one particular level or norm of behaviour. A more contextualized view, however, would suggest that a key concern of the planners was that the mental hygiene movement had stalled in its progress. This indeed was the conclusion that Seeley reached at the end of the project:

....no forcing of the data, no optimism, no sympathy with aims can lead us to suggest that mental health in the community is sensibly better than elsewhere or that after all this effort it is being sensibly improved. Why not? ⁴⁷⁴

Whatever the explanation, this talk at the highest levels of the CNCMH and the U of T Department of Psychiatry of weeding out teachers and students and of “levelling” mental health in Forest Hill enables us to trace these more nefarious elements in the seemingly benign post-war mental health movement back to their roots in pre-war eugenicist ideology. The intervening factor that forced this apparent shift from eugenics to mental health, of course, was the Holocaust. But even this was not enough to shake the powers that be out of their prejudice, it would seem, for it emerged at this point in the planning of the project that one of the principal aims of the research component of the Forest Hill Village Project was to be: “A study of the pattern and the transmission of anti-semitism”. ⁴⁷⁵

The historical context made the appearance of the “History of the Jews in Toronto”, and the “Causes and Effects of Anti-Semitism” as a major focus of the Forest Hill Village Project somewhat suspicious. The question raised is whether the concern of the Forest Hill Village Project Planners was the dangers of a re-emergence of the social unrest that had characterized the relations between Jewish and Gentile communities in Toronto before the war. Perhaps it was just a coincidence that the Jewish community of Toronto happened to be encroaching on the traditionally anglo-saxon community of Forest Hill, and that the Jewish children at Forest Hill Collegiate were rapidly coming to outnumber the Gentile kids. Of course, the Jewish community was, as Seeley rightfully pointed out, perhaps more sympathetic to developments in the field of mental health in the 1950s during the heyday of psychoanalysis, which was largely associated in the public mind with Jewish culture. Yet, if this was the case why was Seeley so guarded about any public statements in regard to this research aspect of the Forest Hill Village Project? In fact, Seeley explicitly requested in his Memorandum to Aldwyn Stokes dated June 30th, 1949 that the part of the research program that involved anti-semitism be kept

⁴⁷⁴ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 410.

⁴⁷⁵ Memorandum from Seeley to Stoke re- Forest Hill Village Project, June 30th, 1949, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

confidential and not released to the public in any way out of concern for the reaction of the people of Forest Hill:

Further to our conversation I am sending copies of two reports on the Forest Hill Village Project. The first is marked CONFIDENTIAL and is for the information only of the President of the University of Toronto and such other persons not themselves the subject of the research as he deems fit. The second is smaller and suitable for general publication.

I know that you agree that it is vital to the welfare of the whole project that nothing should be published which emphasizes research or experiment. This would only re-evoke the already latent definition of themselves as “guinea pigs” which Forest Hill Village people have. This would militate seriously against research possibilities, if it did not actually destroy them.⁴⁷⁶

The first, confidential part of the report makes mention of research interests in regard to the “history of the jews” and “anti-semitism” in two or three different places alongside the outline of a project to collect very personal data on the population of Forest Hill including the development of a “personality inventory”, a “Teachers Rating Scale”, and the collection of data in regard to “Family structure, sex, ethnicity and personality characteristics”. In the second part of the report, which Seeley suggested was suitable for publication, no mention whatever was made about anti-semitism in particular, or about the collection of social data more generally.

One might expect that because of the recent memory of the Holocaust there would have been a particular level of caution on the part of the doctors, and alarm on the part of the Jewish community, in regard to any signs of mass experimentation or any other form of governmental surveillance. Yet, this was precisely what the Forest Hill Village Project, and its ambitious social engineers, proposed to do. Of course, Seeley and the founders of the project would claim that any interest on their part in anti-semitism was only for the sake of improving the mental health and social stability of Jewish–Gentile relations in Forest Hill. Again, however, the trend toward contradiction between stated aims and actual methods in the FHVP might suggest that such claims should be treated with a measure of skepticism. The Jewish community in Forest Hill at the time was surely not naïve in this regard, but perhaps being so eager to repress for a time the memory of recent events, to avoid the limelight, and to take advantage of their growing wealth by advancing their social status and educational opportunities; they went along with what from their perspective was a minor recurrence of the same old tribal warfare to which they had been subjected from time immemorial. As one Jewish man was

⁴⁷⁶ Memorandum from Seeley to Stokes re- Forest Hill Village Project, June 30th, 1949, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

recorded as having said in regard to concerns in the Jewish community about the Forest Hill Village Project:

....let sleeping dogs lie – things have been like this for 3000 years and we can't change them....⁴⁷⁷

It is hard not to speculate at this point about the personal feelings of John R. Seeley regarding the emerging focus in the planning documents for the Forest Hill Village Project on problems of anti-semitism given his own concerns about concealing his Jewish identity. Whether out of a desire to flee or from ambition, Seeley had just left behind a somewhat immersed Jewish intellectual experience at U of C where he had become associated with famous Jewish scholars like Bettelheim and Riesman. He had returned instead into the fold of the WASP establishment in Toronto led by men like Hincks, Stokes, Line and Griffin who were inclined to be suspicious of the intimidating Jewish presence in the field of psychiatry. On the one hand, given that Seeley sometimes indulged in an occasional anti-semitic slur of his own, perhaps now back in Toronto, and eager to blend in with the Gentile establishment, Seeley decided to use his special awareness of Jewish issues to his advantage. Unlike the other Jews, Seeley felt free because of the “Wolff Story” to stand outside the pack and offer criticism. Being one of them, but not really one of them, he had a unique capacity to act in the role of cultural spy on behalf of the Gentile establishment. For their part, the Gentile elite may have been particularly concerned in the early post-war era about the growing population of the Jewish community in Toronto, and the cultural allegiance of the “Greenies”. In Foucauldian terms Seeley might have allowed himself at the time to become a particularly effective instrument of power as part of the new surveillance systems being set up by the elite in Toronto after the war. Indeed, this would have been a subtle but effective way for Seeley to ingratiate himself to his Gentile superiors, and Seeley was nothing if not subtle.

On the other hand, one might think that Seeley would have been reluctant to re-immers himself in a Jewish community like Forest Hill at all. He had once expressed the fear that his Jewishness would be exposed if his brother Frank came to visit him in Toronto. He had also at one point, we can recall, snickered at Fischer's own cultural pride by suggesting that his friend learn from his own stealth on the question of Jewish heritage, “I smart enough to conceal it”. From this perspective it would seem that Seeley might have harbored considerable anxiety at the unhappy coincidence that the community of Forest Hill was fifty percent Jewish and that his supervisors were interested in a scientific

⁴⁷⁷ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

examination of that community and its issues. Perhaps this re-immersion into a Jewish community in Toronto played into the “diffuse anxiety” that began to trouble Seeley when it came time to write-up the Forest Hill Village Project in *Crestwood Heights*. However, as an impostor, perhaps Seeley took delight in running close to the edge of being exposed as a test of his powers of deception. Whatever was really happening, it certainly stretches the bounds of credulity to believe that it was a mere coincidence that brought Forest Hill Village and John R. Seeley together in the late 1940s.

iv) Federal Mental Health Grants

With the twin specters of depression and socialism looming in the background, federal-provincial relations became dominated by power-sharing and taxation issues around the need to introduce new social security measures in the post-war era. According to historian Joseph Schull, there was little difference between the strategic doctrine of the Canadian Government and that of the Government of the United States in the Cold War. In a word, the strategy was containment:

The Central Government, which had brilliantly financed the war, was preparing its plans for peace. The aim was to achieve stability and forestall another depression by increasing social services and the security of the individual. The old age pension, without the requirement of a means test and universal to all, was one of the schemes envisioned. Health and hospital insurance lurked in the near background....In the opinion of Mackenzie King....buttressing low incomes was one of the first defences against socialism and hard times.⁴⁷⁸

With Brock Chisolm being appointed as the Deputy Minister of the new Federal Ministry of Health, a focus on mental health was bound to be part of the planning for social stability in the transition period after the war. It was under Chisolm’s direction that a new Mental Health Division was established within the Ministry and, as historian Harvey Simmons observed, “with the establishment of a federal Department of National Health and Welfare in 1944, and the appointment of a chief of the mental health division, the federal government began to play an active role in mental health policy”.⁴⁷⁹ As we have already shown, the federal government did not just suddenly appear in the field of mental health policy, but had already begun to build its programs and expertise in the area during the war through the work of the Directorate of Personnel Selection. Chisolm’s move to institutionalize mental health policy in the form of the new Mental Health Division might be seen as part of a strategic process of expansion for psychiatric interests from military circles to civil society.

⁴⁷⁸ Joseph Schull, *Ontario Since 1867* (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1985), 319.

⁴⁷⁹ Harvey G. Simmons, *Unbalanced: Mental Health Policy in Ontario, 1930 – 1989* (Toronto: Wall and Thompson, 1990), 42.

Officially, the purpose of this new federal mental health division, according to the resolution passed by the Dominion Council of Health, was, “to undertake among other things, surveys for the provinces, dissemination of information and coordination of efforts throughout Canada in the mental health field”.⁴⁸⁰ However, in order to legitimize a major role for Chisolm’s important CNCMH allies in setting the *de facto* agenda of the new Mental Health Division, Chisolm decided to call for a Federal-Provincial Conference to discuss “common problems” in a letter to all Provincial Deputy Minister’s of Health sent on July 17th, 1946.⁴⁸¹ That Chisolm was really creating a forum for the dissemination of CNCMH priorities was evident from the fact that even though the proposed meeting was only to include “the appropriate officers of the provincial governments and the federal government”; it so happened that representatives of the CNCMH were also invited to attend including Clare Hincks as, “General Director of the National Committee of Mental Hygiene”, and his right hand man, Jack Griffin.

Interestingly, it was Hincks himself who waded in first as the meeting got started on October 10th, 1946. The opening item on the agenda was a discussion of the functions of the new Mental Health Division. Hincks sought reassurances that the new federal agency would not displace his Committee which, of course, he received. In the context of this discussion, the telling observation was made by Dr. Murray McKay, Medical Superintendent of the Nova Scotia Hospital, that, “there would be many problems in which it would be embarrassing for the Federal Department to implement any action and that such problems could best be handled through a voluntary agency”.⁴⁸² Was Doctor Mackay perhaps thinking of Hincks article in *Maclean’s* Magazine, “Sterilize the Unfit”, published just a few months before, in February of 1946, about the need to sterilize the mentally “defective” in order to prevent “race deterioration”? In any event, as we shall see, this *modus operandi* was advocated by many of the officials involved in mental health policy in governmental circles in the early post-war period. This would seem to hint at an underlying discomfort with the politics around such a sensitive area of public life as mental health management. This may have been part of what inclined governmental interests to work through other parties like the CNCMH or U of T in their first forays into the field of mental health.

⁴⁸⁰ Minutes from First Federal Provincial Conference of Mental Health Directors, October 10th, 11th, 1946, Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-435-6-1, File 435-7-11.

⁴⁸¹ Minutes from First Federal Provincial Conference of Mental Health Directors, October 10th, 11th, 1946, Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-435 – 6-1, File 435-7-11 pt 2.

⁴⁸² Minutes from First Federal Provincial Conference of Mental Health Directors, October 10th, 11th, 1946, Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-435 – 6-1, File 435-7-11 pt 3.

After their brief discussion of the functions of the Mental Health Division, these pioneering federal-provincial officials turned to the role of educational institutions. Again, despite not having been formally invited to the meeting, it was Dr. Hincks who started off the conversation. Hincks was obviously already thinking along the lines of what Seeley was to more carefully formulate in, “Mental Health for Canada”. According to the minutes of the meeting:

He pointed out that today, through the daily press, magazines, moving pictures, radio etc....the public is showing hitherto unprecedented interest in the field of psychiatry and mental health, and it is important to direct this interest in the right channels. He mentioned the tremendous current demand for information on child guidance, on parent education, and on the care of mentally retarded children.⁴⁸³

Hincks obviously felt that education was the “right channel” for development in mental health policy. At this meeting the principle was therefore established, through a unanimous resolution of the federal-provincial representatives, that a planning process would be established involving all three parties, including the federal mental health division, its provincial counterparts and the CNCMH, for the development of preventive mental hygiene initiatives, which would be educational in nature:

It was unanimously resolved that a committee be established of representatives from the Department of National Health and Welfare, the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, and the Department of Veterans Affairs, with power to add to their number, to study the need for more adequate training facilities for psychiatrists in Canada, and to prepare a plan of national scope to meet this need, and to further research on preventive programmes in psychiatry in Canada.⁴⁸⁴

On the basis of this resolution, not only did the CNCMH go forward with its planning document, “Mental Health for Canada”, but the institutional architecture within the Federal government was also established through which such planning documents could be used as the basis for lobbying efforts. Specifically, in the spirit of the resolution, the Department of National Health and Welfare established an Advisory Committee on Mental Health on August 27th, 1947 which was to include federal officials and, “such other persons not to exceed fifteen in number, to be appointed by the Minister of National Health and Welfare to hold office during good behaviour for two years”. The official purpose of this Advisory Committee was to:

⁴⁸³ Minutes from First Federal Provincial Conference of Mental Health Directors, October 10th, 11th, 1946, Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29, 435-7-11, File 435-7-11 pt 3.

⁴⁸⁴ Minutes from First Federal Provincial Conference of Mental Health Directors, October 10th, 11th, 1946, Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 , RG 29, File 435-7-11 pt 3.

Facilitate cooperation between the Mental Health Division and the Provincial Mental Health Services with a view to the exchange of information, the co-ordination of effort and activities in order to ensure the existence and maintenance of the highest standards of mental health services and procedures.⁴⁸⁵

It will come as no surprise that the most powerful, formerly eugenicist, mental health crusaders of the CNCMH were quickly appointed to this Advisory Committee including Dr's Bott, Blatz and Line of the U of T Department of Psychology, Dr. Stokes of the U of T Department of Psychiatry, and Hincks and Griffin of the CNCMH. Dr. Ewan Cameron was also made a member of the new Advisory Committee on Mental Health. It is no wonder that within a year after the appointment of such a body, federal funding began to flow toward experimental pet projects such as the Forest Hill Village Project in Toronto and, together with funding from the CIA, the psychic driving experiments of Dr. Cameron at the Allen Memorial Institute in Montreal.

What is somewhat curious, on the other hand, is that this federal funding was forthcoming despite the strong reservations of the staff at the new Mental Health Division about Seeley's plan as articulated in, "Mental Health for Canada". Remembering that Seeley had presented his blueprint to the Board of the CNCMH the previous fall, we are not surprised to learn that it was the subject of discussion in an exchange of memoranda between Dr. Charles Stodghill, Chief of the new Mental Health Division, and Dr. G.D.W. Cameron, Deputy Minister of Health during the winter of 1948. Stodgill reminded his superior in a March 30th memo of an earlier discussion they had held about Seeley's blueprint in January of 1948, in which they had both agreed to support the proposed plan with the following caveat:

At that time I believe you felt as I did that the aim of the undertaking could not be quarreled with but that more information was necessary.⁴⁸⁶

It is slightly disappointing to see that Stodgill and Cameron were loyal to a fault in their respect for the public servant's democratic responsibility to remain objective in regard to ultimate political aims. In their exchange of memos no discussion beyond such a blanket acceptance of the recommendations of the CNCMH takes place. Rather, they focused on the mechanics of policy as good civil servants should do. Stodgill does, however, raise concerns about potential implementation problems with Seeley's plan:

⁴⁸⁵ Minutes from First Federal Provincial Conference of Mental Health Directors, October 10th, 11th, 1946, Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29, File 435-7-11 pt 3.

⁴⁸⁶ Memo from Stodghill to Cameron, March 30, 1948, Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-3, R227-103-5-E, File 435-7-11.

I feel that the aim of this project, *viz.* to concentrate our efforts on the child, is good. However, I have no information on the attitude of the educational world beyond what is contained in a paragraph on p. 16 of the attached brief on the subject. Further, I do not know what has been obtained in the way of cooperation from the Deputy Ministers of Health. In view of these serious deficiencies I do not see that I can make a recommendation with regard to this project, beyond the general one that more information be supplied. If the Dominion Government contributes, it should have a voice in the planning and administration of the project.⁴⁸⁷

In response, the Deputy Minister was even more “puzzled” about implementation issues than Stogdill seemed to be, and called for further comment from Stogdill on Seeley’s plan:

I am puzzled about the one year people who are going to busy themselves with schoolteachers and children. I am also puzzled about the Commissioner of Mental Health. I can see the necessity of joining the health department and the department of education in any mental health campaign, but, I doubt the wisdom of doing it by superimposing a commissioner over the two. What do you think about this aspect of the proposal? I don’t see how the National Committee of Mental Hygiene can hope to gather their subscriptions in the amounts proposed. It seems to me that a tremendous amount of public education would be required to do that. They have been sold on T. B. largely because a very definite and easily understood course of action has been explained to them. I don’t think this is the case with the mental health programme.⁴⁸⁸

In other words, Cameron did not think Seeley’s plan was sufficiently concrete, nor his articulation of the plan sufficiently succinct. These are frustrations that anyone who is familiar with Seeley’s style would share, but they also reflect the typical bureaucrat’s instinct to put it all on one page.

At least one other official in the Mental Health Division, by the name of Gordon H. Josie, agreed with Cameron’s skepticism in regard to Seeley’s blueprint. On the 19th of April he wrote up a more extensive critique of “Mental Health for Canada” in a memorandum submitted to Dr. Stogdill. It would seem that Stogdill felt that Cameron’s memo was a request for further study of Seeley’s plan, and he assigned Josie to the file. I wonder how pleased Stogdill was with Josie’s critique, which amounted to a dismissal of Seeley’s plan as impractical. Josie was critical of Seeley’s claim that the up-front costs of government investment in mental health programs would be offset by the long-term reductions in expenditures that were projected to ensue. He wrote:

This type of reduction of expenditure or saving represented by the anticipated success of remedial or preventive programs, which we have also considered in connection with the drug addiction problem, seems to me to be somewhat misleading, since the national bill for mental ill health and the economic

⁴⁸⁷ Memorandum from Cameron to Stodghill, March 30th, 1948, Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-3, R227-103-5-E, File 435-7-11.

⁴⁸⁸ Memorandum from Josie to Dr. Stogdill, April 2nd, 1948, Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-3, R227-103-5-E, File 435-7-11.

loss to drug addiction are both paper figures and do not represent actual expenditures from which deductions may be anticipated.⁴⁸⁹

Furthermore, in regard to financial issues, Josie thought that the sums of money that Seeley was asking for were too ambitious:

The proposal is for a three way share of the cost of the program between the Dominion and Provincial governments and the public. There is no other indication of the way the money is to be obtained or whether any relationship between source and use is contemplated. Certainly the provision of clinics, guidance officers and teachers would seem to be government responsibilities, and in fact, if they are not so accepted, then it is doubtful that they could operate effectively as part of the school system. The total of 12 million dollars per annum seems a large expenditure as an additional item in view of the fact that this is approximately equal to the general public health expenditures in Canada.

...It is not clear to me at least why the public should be called on to contribute one-third of this large sum. The National Committee might well devote its attention to extending public support for appropriate government action. Furthermore, the anticipated objective of four million dollars is optimistic when considered in light of the fact that the total Canadian Community Chest's annual objectives have never reached ten million dollars. The raising of such a sum would indeed be a constant concern of a continuing body. There are already signs in this country, as in the United States, that the public is becoming a little impatient with the multiplicity of appeals for worthy causes.⁴⁹⁰

It certainly speaks to the grandiosity of Seeley's plan, or to the weakness of his financial analysis, that he proposed that the equivalent to the total commitment of Canada's health expenditures should be devoted to preventive mental health programs in schools. On the other hand, the most penetrating critique Josie offers was not in regard to financial issues, but rather to the vague institutional architecture proposed in the plan:

The upshot of the plan seems to be an expansion of the development of mental clinics and educational and preventive measures concentrated around the school. These are both sound and generally accepted objectives but do not represent a new or unique program. The new element in the plan seems to be the recognition of the importance of the school as an accessible focal point, so to speak, and the proposal to develop a new type of specialist – the liaison or guidance officer. Regarding this, it is suggested that with the prevailing hue and cry about the shortages of teachers, nurses and social workers, it is at least questionable whether a further element should be introduced. Further, these three have in varying degrees considerable relevant training, some of which will have to be imparted to the new officers who will be recruited if not from the ranks of present teachers, nurses or social workers, at least from the same potential source....

⁴⁸⁹ Memorandum from Josie to Dr. Stogdill, April 19th, 1948, Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-3, R227-103-5-E, File 435-7-11.

⁴⁹⁰ Memorandum from Josie to Dr. Stogdill, April 19th, 1948, Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-3, R227-103-5-E, File 435-7-11.

Regarding the special training of school teachers in mental hygiene principles and practice, it would seem that if the teachers are not already receiving sufficient of this type of training, effort might best be addressed at emphasizing these factors in present normal schools, summer schools etc....

The proposed training course for the liaison officers which is intended to be “very much down to earth” would seem to have the danger of producing individuals with only a superficial knowledge of the basic sciences and skills....⁴⁹¹

Josie’s memorandum seems to raise the question as to why mental health programs for teachers should be organized by the CNCMH or the U of T Department of Psychiatry rather than by the Normal Schools, as Teacher’s Colleges were then known. In the absence of such integration into the professional education of teachers, whatever learning such a program achieved would be bound to be superficial, as Josie rightly points out. Moreover, the knowledge and experience gained in mental health techniques for teachers would have no lasting institutional base from which to be built upon and transmitted.

Yet, despite these very reasonable concerns about a lack of commitment, excessive costs, and misguided institutional arrangements, the plan was not rejected. Rather a way was sought to minimize the risks to the federal government from participation in the scheme. It would appear that Cameron, Stodgill and Josie strove to support Hincks proposal even against their better judgment. There is a note in the handwriting of Josie in the Mental Health Division records from April 1948 in which he records what appears to be a discussion with Stodgill that hints at a desire to appease Hincks for some reason:

Everyone says fine – but somebody else must make final move ... What would be attitude of the provinces if only 2 centers – Toronto and Montreal – were started for first five years?⁴⁹²

So the solution was to narrow down the scheme to a pilot project. Eventually, as it turned out, this little note jotted on a federal bureaucrats pad turned out to be decisive because in the end this was precisely what happened. No wonder, in the end, governments didn’t follow through on the Forest Hill Village Project. They never really believed it was a workable plan in the first place.

Still, the question remains as to why federal officials were so willing to accommodate Hincks and the CNCMH despite their skepticism about the measures proposed? Two principal reasons seem to suggest themselves on the basis of the evidence reviewed so far. First, the federal mental health

⁴⁹¹ Memorandum from Josie to Dr. Stodgill April 19th, 1948 Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-3, R227-103-5-E, File 435-7-11.

⁴⁹² Josie’s Notes, April, 1948 Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-3, R227-103-5-E, File 435-7-11.

division relied on the Provinces, CNCMH and U of T for the implementation of policy and therefore they had no choice but to accommodate their interests to some extent. Moreover, the federal commitment did hold a potential pay-back for the government in the sense that it was to its advantage to conceal its role in the mental health field until a certain level of political legitimacy had already been established. This was openly admitted to by such an eminent politician as Paul Martin, Minister of Health and Welfare, in a 1949 letter to Dr. Meakins, then President of the CNCMH, reiterating what had been earlier brought to our attention by Dr. McKay of Nova Scotia during the Federal-Provincial Meeting that initiated the whole process:

I feel very strongly that the voluntary organizations in the health field have important and unique functions which governmental bodies cannot, and should not, attempt to fulfill. To various problems of health there are approaches which a government cannot assume until their worth has been proved – and it has happened many times that the proving has been done by voluntary bodies....⁴⁹³

Perhaps the federal bureaucrats were willing to give Seeley's plan backing as a way to feel out the possibilities in their new realm of jurisdiction. This was all the more in their interests given the general political agenda at the time to find ways to enhance social stability and close any potential openings for socialist parties. In this effort, naturally, it was to the advantage of the federal mandarins to humour the patrons of the CNCMH amongst who were numbered elite members of the business class, the peerage and academia. Of course it also didn't hurt that they were all also close personal friends. That this was the case would seem to be indicated by the following letter by way of apology for the behaviour of Hincks, from Dr. Line to Dr. Charles Stodgill:

Dear 'Chick':

... My telephone call was completely personal but I did take the liberty of telling Clare about it. His acceptance of our conversation was one of great enthusiasm. He especially wanted me to emphasize our enthusiasm for your leadership in this whole field and our strong desire to play whatever ball and in whatever capacity you feel appropriate. Any slight passivity that he personally may have shown during your recent visit here was entirely due to his own person – he is not feeling one hundred percent just now – a matter that will be corrected when he can get a few days holiday.

I am not quite sure when I am going to Ottawa next but it will probably be during the last week of June. I will get in touch with you beforehand and hope that we can have a visit together then. Dorothy and Catherine are going to be at Bristol, Quebec, from July 24th for a couple of weeks or more. Daphne will be visiting for the weekend and I know that Dorothy would like to see you all either by your visiting Bristol or by her dropping in on you at Ottawa if you are in town at that time.⁴⁹⁴

⁴⁹³ Paul Martin to Meakins, February 6th, 1949, Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-3, R227-103-5-E, File 435-7-11.

⁴⁹⁴ Line to Stodgill, June 2nd, 1948, Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-3, R227-103-5-E, File 435-7-11.

How could Stodgill turn down a request from one of his best friends for a little help with a pet project? Not to mention the fact that Stodghill's boss, Brock Chisolm, was also friendly with Line and Hincks, and might frown upon a failure to back up the agenda of his friends and allies in Toronto.

One may still wonder, even considering all these levels of interest, why it was so important to all of these men to pursue the mental health of Canadians with such eager courtesy and systematic relationship building. Was it pure altruism or was it perhaps the fact that their professional status was significantly enhanced by winning governmental recognition and funding. "Mental Health for Canada" was money-in-the bank for Line, Hincks, Griffin, and Seeley. Of course, as Doctors they could get other work, but the continued viability of the CNCMH enabled them to keep cozy administrative jobs that did not require them to actually treat patients. Whether or not the project was actually feasible and properly conceived was perhaps secondary to all of these more political considerations.

To return to the maneuvering of the federal Mental Health Division to ensure that Seeley's project, "Mental Health for Canada", was reduced to a manageable size and subjected to proper management; the correspondence between Stodgill and Hincks over the summer of 1948 reveals that a few more subtly-communicated changes to the plan were required in exchange for federal cooperation. First, the federal government wanted the project supervised by the U of T Department of Psychiatry, though there is no clear explanation as to why. In a letter from Stodgill to Hincks of June 26th, 1948, this is spelled out:

I had a letter from Jack Griffin a few days ago about expanding the activities of the Mental Hygiene Consultation Services. I think the best way for him to go about getting government support for this is through the University Department concerned with the training of the types of personnel involved. It seems too that the same procedure would apply to your Forest Hill Village pilot plant...⁴⁹⁵

The recommended shift to University auspices, which we have already seen Seeley himself acknowledge as a "condition of the grant money", might very well have been designed as a way to address the federal mental health division's concern about the effectiveness of a training program for teachers that did not have an academic base. The point was quickly taken by Hincks who responded in a letter to Stodgill just days later, on June 30th, 1948:

⁴⁹⁵ Stodgill to Hincks, June 26th, 1948 Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-3, R227-103-5-E, File 435-7-11.

In this office we will immediately explore ways and means of developing a linkage between the University of Toronto and two of our projects – the Mental Hygiene Consultation Service and the Forest Hill undertaking.⁴⁹⁶

A further condition of the grant money was that a *quid pro quo* in terms of respect for a certain amount of federal surveillance of the program be allowed. As Paul Martin, the federal Minister of Health, was quick to point out, the mental health grant was to be the largest of the government grants in the health field to be awarded in 1948. In fact, the federal government promised to commit more money to various mental health initiatives across the country than the four million that had initially been requested in Seeley's proposal, "Mental Health for Canada". Paul Martin wrote to Dr. Meakins, the official President of the CNCMH on March 1st, 1949 that:

The Mental Health Grant is, as you know, the largest of the grants in specific health fields, increasing over the years from \$4, 000, 000 to \$7, 000, 000.⁴⁹⁷

With such a large sum invested, the federal government naturally wanted to keep an eye on how the money was spent, and yet it faced the difficulty of having to demand surveillance powers in what, constitutionally speaking, was a matter of provincial concern. The way Martin sought to straddle this line, as is typical in politics, was to say one thing but do another. In an earlier letter to Dr. Meakins of July 13th 1948, the Minister of Health, Paul Martin, starts out by declaring his intention to respect provincial jurisdiction:

The mental health grant, like the other grants announced by the Prime Minister on May 14th, 1948 is a grant to the provinces. There is no intention on the part of the Federal government to dictate to the provinces as to the use of the grant....⁴⁹⁸

However, in the space of a mere two paragraphs in the same letter, in which he has spelled out the purpose of the grant for, "the expansion and improvement of preventive and treatment services", Martin shifts to a much more interventionist tone:

You will appreciate that it will be necessary for me to be informed as to the effective use being made of these large sums of money, as I am answerable to Parliament. This will necessitate a certain

⁴⁹⁶ Hincks to Stodghill, June 30, 1948 Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-3, R227-103-5-E, File 435-7-11.

⁴⁹⁷ Martin to Meakins, March 1, 1949 Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-3, R227-103-5-E, File 435-7-11.

⁴⁹⁸ Martin to Meakins, July 13, 1948, Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-3, R227-103-5-E, File 435-7-11.

amount of supervision of the expenditure of funds. You will be glad to know that it is planned to strengthen the Mental Health Division of this Department for this purpose.⁴⁹⁹

In a rather cryptic comment, Martin even goes so far as to allude to an overall policy direction for the historically-unprecedented federal foray in Mental Health and Education in 1948:

I agree that misinformation and erroneous attitudes must be dispelled and more healthful attitudes inculcated in the rural parts as well as in the urban portions of our population.⁵⁰⁰

On the one hand, it seems that Martin is recommending here that the goal of the mental health initiative was to address the stigma problem with regard to mental health issues. On the other hand, the use of the terms “inculcate ... in the population” in this context carries with it connotations of forcefulness that may betray underlying social control intentions behind governmental involvement in the mental health field at this time in history. Moreover, we we may suspect that in the early post-war era governmental concern in regard to “misinformation and erroneous attitudes” extended beyond mental health issues. In this context we may do well to recall that C. K. Clarke and other early leaders in the Canadian mental health field considered bolshevism and socialism to be symptoms of mental illness.

Given this complex panorama of interests involved in the governmental decision-making, it comes as no surprise that federal funding was rapidly forthcoming once the CNCMH won the cooperation of the Forest Hills Schools Board of Education for the Project. This was confirmed in research that Alex Sim, one of the other authors of *Crestwood Heights*, retrospectively conducted into the history of the Forest Hill Village Project:

It would appear that the search for a community in which to locate the project was completed before the search for money was completed. We find a record of a committee meeting of July 1948 entitled, “The President’s Ad-Hoc Committee to Consider University Training Programs under Provincial Mental Health Grants”. Already the interested departments were assembled – psychology, social work, medicine, nursing and psychiatry – along with Professor William Line representing the Forest Hill Village Project. This meeting laid before the President the prospect of \$7, 000, 000 emanating from Ottawa, of which \$1, 200, 00 would constitute the Ontario share. With deft action the University could claim its substantial part of this share.

⁴⁹⁹ Martin to Meakins, July 13, 1948, Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-3, R227-103-5-E, File 435-7-11.

⁵⁰⁰ Martin to Meakins, July 13, 1948, Library and Archives Canada, Mental Health Division [textual record] 1946-1974 RG 29-3, R227-103-5-E, File 435-7-11.

The record reports the interest of the Federal Government, “in considering overall requirements in the mental health field for the immediate need for the training of personnel and the promotion of research. Without trained personnel and new approaches the development of new grants would be a vain long term policy”. The report to the President quickly moves on to details of budgetary allocations. “The departments listed as well as the Institute of Child Study and the Institute of Industrial Relations all had proposals to make with amounts totaling \$178, 000 or 14% of the total provincial allocation”.

The Forest Hill Project was mentioned in the ad hoc committee’s report as an activity of the Department of Psychiatry, but there was no specific budgetary proposal. However, provision was made for the appointment of a sociologist to the Department of Psychiatry, a position which was later filled by John R. Seeley, who moved from the CNCMH to the University.⁵⁰¹

For his part, Seeley’s reminiscences about his move from the CNCMH to the Department of Psychiatry in order to take the helm as Director of the Forest Hill Village Project had two different levels. On one level, it had to do with securing government funding. Seeley wrote in an autobiographical letter to Everett Hughes to this effect:

I went from the C.M.H.A. (1948) to the Department of Psychiatry at Toronto by agreement with both, simply because the Dominion Government would only support our joint research-and-action scheme under University auspices.⁵⁰²

On another level Seeley hinted in personal interviews that the move may have had more to do with Machiavellian scheming on his part to see his mental health project through to realization. It might appear that Seeley had cultivated his natural connection as a fellow Englishmen with the new Chair of the Department of Psychiatry, Dr. Aldwyn Stokes, toward this end. Seeley remembered having become concerned at the time that Hincks was so unreliable because of his semi-annual depressions that even keeping a watchful eye on him would not have been enough to enable him to see through such a gigantic undertaking. As we have already discussed, it would seem that not only was Stokes eager to befriend a fellow Englishmen in the strange frontier world of Upper Canada, he also had reasons of his own to bring Seeley as a sociologist into the Department of Psychiatry. He wanted to distinguish himself from his very conservative predecessors by embracing a new brand of eclectic psychiatry.

In any case, Seeley’s move to the Department of Psychiatry had already been achieved by January of 1949, as was attested to in the announcement, with some pride of accomplishment, of this bold

⁵⁰¹ Alex Sim, “The Person in the Process”, The William Line Seminar, 1972, Toronto, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Archives, Fonds, 1918-1984 CAONOOO8

⁵⁰² Seeley to Everett Hughes, December 19, 1970 University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center, Hughes, Everett Cherrington Papers, 1910-1966, Box 57.

interdisciplinary undertaking by Stokes at a presentation he gave on the, “Biosocial Aspects of Psychiatry” to the Academy of Medicine Meeting on January 7th, 1949 held at the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital:

The movement in psychiatry which is giving due emphasis to groups, to social structure and function, and to cultural pressures is, therefore, to be fostered. In that movement, as I see it, is to be found a corrective to the theoretical psychopathological structures reared on the findings of individual techniques.⁵⁰³

In line with this general outlook a full time social scientist has been appointed to the Department of Psychiatry. This appointment is I think unique and from the establishment of a liaison with another discipline great psychiatric benefit should accrue. In any event, I commend Mr. Seeley to you and ask for your attention to a short discourse, preparatory to the case presentations, on “Some possible contributions from social sciences to clinical insight in Psychiatry”.⁵⁰⁴

As Seeley recounts in another of his lengthy letters to Everett Hughes, with this appointment by Stokes, he had not only maneuvered himself into the U of T Department of Psychiatry, he also suddenly found himself operating as a novel psychiatric practitioner of sorts:

I thus found myself training psychiatrists, teaching teachers, instructing sociologists in the making and running an “empire” bigger than some departments.⁵⁰⁵

At this point, if ever in his career, Seeley does seem to verge on playing the role of an imposter. Here he was at the age of 35, with no formal medical or psychiatric training, nor anything but the minimum training in education and academic research, being entrusted with considerable responsibility in the field of psychiatry. There are copies of notes in the “Fischer Papers” written up by Seeley of psychiatric interviews conducted by himself as a member of the Department of Psychiatry. An example is the following psychiatric evaluation done by Seeley entitled, “Confidential Memo Re: Bob Metcalf, Nicholas Hermes”:

Discussion began with a deliberately vague definition of the situation; something we could do while his parents were with Dr. Stokes; something that might be helpful...He was told, on ordinary grounds

⁵⁰³ Aldwyn Stokes, “The Biosocial Aspects of Psychiatry”, Meeting of the Academy of Medicine, January 7, 1949, University of Toronto Archives, Department of Psychiatry Fonds, 1947 – 1968, A1986 – 0032, Ref A1986-0032/001, file 8: BIOSOCIAL

⁵⁰⁴ Aldwyn Stokes, “The Biosocial Aspects of Psychiatry”, Meeting of the Academy of Medicine, January 7, 1949, University of Toronto Archives, Department of Psychiatry Fonds, 1947 – 1968, A1986 – 0032, Ref A1986-0032/001, file 8: BIOSOCIAL

⁵⁰⁵ Seeley to Everett Hughes, October 20th, 1958, University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center, Hughes, Everett Cherrington Papers, 1910-1966, Box 57.

of honesty but as a chosen part of the definition that the writer was not a psychiatrist (or, indeed, a doctor) but that he understood some of these things.⁵⁰⁶

The issues troubling the boy were strikingly similar to Seeley's own childhood issues. According to the memo, Seeley recommends that the boy be allowed to "flee", or to leave home, by going to boarding school at Ridley College which was what he wanted. So Seeley recommended that the boy handle the situation in much the same way that he had done.

v) U of T Working Committee

The historical record of the correspondence between Stokes as Chair of the Department of Psychiatry and his supervisors, Assistant to the President of the University Dr. C. T. Bissel and the President of the University Dr. Sydney Smith, shows that Stokes was energetic in building an organizational framework at U of T for the implementation of the Forest Hill Village Project. According to a letter submitted by Dr. Stokes as Chairman of the President's Standing Committee on Mental Health Training to Sydney Smith, a number of recommendations were identified for the overall implementation of the Dominion Health Grants. The focus of these recommendations was that an inter-disciplinary approach would be the key to success in the field of mental health. The U of T Departments to be involved in the Forest Hill Village Project were to include psychiatry, psychology, education, nursing, social work, and industrial relations. Seeley's empire was built on this inter-disciplinary foundation.

The recommendations from Stokes' Committee also hinted at a fundamental tension that must have existed within the university community between its desire to maintain a sense of academic freedom, and its desire to take advantage of the funds the federal and provincial governments were willing to provide. Thus the Standing Committee on Mental Health established both the principle that the planning of the committee must, "be related to autonomous University conditions", but in the next statement, that "nonetheless, planning must be aligned to the practical needs of the community".⁵⁰⁷ What is strange is that what was really meant by the "needs of the community" here is never really spelled out. It just seems to be assumed that a new more urgent concern for the mental health of the nation was something that was pressing at the time.

⁵⁰⁶ Confidential Memo Re: Bob Metcalf, Nicholas Hermes April 9th, 1953, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

⁵⁰⁷ Report by the Standing Committee on Mental Health Training, February, 1949, Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973 RG 10 – 22, File 65, B259448.

In submitting his committee's official recommendations to President Smith on February 10th 1949, Dr. Stokes again repeated the interesting turn in post-war discourse away from mental "defectiveness" to mental "health":

Your committee in its work has endeavoured to coordinate the postgraduate teaching resources of the University to the end of combating mental disorder and promoting mental health.⁵⁰⁸

What a strange task for a university to devote itself too. How could an institution of higher learning shift its focus so suddenly, in the aftermath of World War, from academic inquiry to the more strategic, or at least medical, goal of "combating" mental disorder? Again, the recurrent use of military metaphor rears its head in the context of the Forest Hill Village Project. This strange combat mission may reveal something about the real task that the university had assumed. The fact that one strand of the mental health campaign of the university was to study the uses of mental health techniques in industry in order to enhance worker productivity and minimize sick-days, would support this perspective⁵⁰⁹. It would appear that as a *quid pro quo* for federal funding, the university was willing to act as an arm of the state in the effort to pacify a population in transition from war to peace.

Stokes went on in his letter to Smith to emphasize the national importance of the work U of T was to undertake in the implementation of the mental health grants:

Your committee....has recognized that Toronto, as one of the largest, if not the largest, educational centre in the Dominion, has a responsibility transcending local needs. While every effort has been directed to making the maximum contribution to the Provincial field a broader Dominion interest has also been sustained.⁵¹⁰

It would seem that there is evidence here of the typical pattern of identification between the interests of Ontario and that of Canada, but also of the role of the university not strictly as an academic institution but also as a much more flexible organization capable of shifting focus depending on the interests of the sources of its funding. The university is more than willing to play the role of policy development, or social engineer, where the politicians are reluctant to tread, if it helps pay the bills.

⁵⁰⁸ Report by the Standing Committee on Mental Health Training, February, 1949, Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973 RG 10 – 22, File 65, B259448.

⁵⁰⁹ Report by the Standing Committee on Mental Health Training, February, 1949, Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973 RG 10 – 22, File 65, B259448.

⁵¹⁰ Memo to Dr. D. W. Cameron, DM of National Health, re – Attendance at the Annual Meeting of the National Scientific Planning Committee of the Canadian Mental Health Association, Feb 2, 3rd, 1952 Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, RG 10 – 22, File 65, B259448.

The first appointments in relation to the Forest Hill Village Project at this time included the appointment of Dr. L. Maltby as psychiatrist to the Forest Hill School Clinic. According to a Report on the Activities of the Department of Psychiatry under the Mental Health Grants, 1948 – 1949, addressed to the President of the University, Maltby's "junior appointment was made to fill a need in a vital child psychiatric service and to link up with the Forest Hill research project".⁵¹¹ Maltby was a pioneer as a woman working in the field of psychiatry in Canada. The daughter of a Canadian missionary born in Japan, Maltby took her teachers diploma in music prior to receiving her training in medicine and psychiatry at U of T in the 1920s. Given her background in education, it was natural for her to want to participate in a psychiatric project in the schools of Toronto. Her inclusion in the CNCMH-inspired Forest Hill Village Project might also have been attributable to her having won a Child Study Fellowship from the Laura Spellman Rockefeller Memorial Fund, along with other distinguished CNCMH-associated graduates like Dr. Blatz.⁵¹²

One other appointment in clinical psychology was made to the Forest Hill Clinic by the name of Mrs. C. Pivnick. According to the report, "Appointments were made under this head to allow the carrying out of clinical psychological work as an important contribution to the training of teachers in the Mental Health aspects of the school setting".⁵¹³ In addition, a social worker was appointed to the Forest Hill Clinic to help with the training of the schoolteachers. Last, but not least, as has already been noted, Seeley's appointment was listed alongside those to the Forest Hill Clinic, though the note in this Report to the President about his appointment singles him out for special accolade. It may be pointed out here that, unlike most others, Stokes' never bought into the fiction that Seeley held a Doctorate. However, at this point, Stokes mistakenly believed that Seeley would fulfill his promise to complete the degree:

Mr. Seeley's appointment represents one of the few full time appointments anywhere of a sociologist in the Health field. His organization of the Forest Hill Village Project has been exemplary. This is a pilot research into the Mental Health problems of a community approached through the school setting. Mr. Seeley has been active in the training program of doctors and teachers.⁵¹⁴

⁵¹¹ Report on the Activities of the Department of Psychiatry under the Mental Health Grants, 1948-1949 Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973 RG10-22, File 68, B259448.

⁵¹² J Gold, M Lalinec-Michaud, O Bernazzani, *Pioneers All: Women Psychiatrists in Canada: A History* (Ottawa: Canadian Psychiatric Association, 1995), 15.

⁵¹³ Report on the Activities of the Department of Psychiatry under the Mental Health Grants, 1948-1949 Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973, RG10-22, File 68, B259448

⁵¹⁴ Stokes to Cameron, July 19, 1950, Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973, RG10-22, File 117.

vi) Provincial Turf

It wasn't long after the Forest Hill Village Project was thus established through the co-operation of the CNCMH, the Federal Government, the U of T Department of Psychiatry, and the Forest Hill Village Schools, that the Provincial Government of Ontario began to make itself known as one of the stakeholders involved. In a letter of July 19th, 1950, Dr. Aldwyn Stokes writing in his capacity as "Chairman of the University of Toronto Working Committee on the Forest Hill Project", and feigning a lack of familiarity with how Canadian federalism works, pleaded with officials at the Department of Health in Ottawa to enforce the mental health grant program at the provincial level. Of course the Province is sovereign in matters within its jurisdiction, so there was really no question of forcing the Provincial Government to do anything, but perhaps Stokes intended something more along the lines of diplomatic pressure.

Stokes began the letter by reviewing the nature of the project as it had taken shape by the end of its first year. It is interesting to observe how Stokes reverses the language Seeley had been careful to use in reference to the project as an exercise in the "promotion of mental health". Stokes introduces the Project in the following way:

You will remember that the Forest Hill School system has been a centre of enquiry into the problems of mental ill health in children.⁵¹⁵

Here we are closer to a direct revision of the language of mental defectiveness, common in regard to CNCMH pre-war discourse about school children, to the new post-war terminology of mental health, or in this case, "mental ill-health". Stokes goes on to review the progress that had been achieved in transferring the project from the CNCMH to University auspices:

The project has two aspects: -

(a) research:

(b) an experience in mental health aspects of the schools for teachers from all over Canada.

The teachers (roughly one from each province) are selected by the educational and psychiatric authorities of their respective Provinces. They are given remuneration under their Provincial Mental Health Grants and are sent to Toronto to be registered with the College of Education. The University of Toronto has organized an education experience for them in the field of Mental Health and many departments have taken part in the curriculum.⁵¹⁶

⁵¹⁵ Stokes to Cameron, July 19, 1950, Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973, RG10-22, File 117.

⁵¹⁶ Stokes to Cameron, July 19, 1950, Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973, RG10-22, File 117.

Stokes then goes on in the letter to complain of a delay in the receipt of funding for the program from Provincial authorities:

This arrangement for teachers from the Dominion was a direct mandate from the Advisory Committee on Mental Health at Ottawa. Toronto was the selected centre for the teacher training and the arrangement was agreed to by the Ontario Provincial Representative on the Advisory Committee. The understanding was that funds would be available under the Mental Health Grant. This year (1950 – 1951) no funds whatsoever have been allowed to the Ontario College of Education in respect to its budget, submitted as part of the University Mental Health training programme. Whatever, the considerations might be which have disallowed the whole departmental budget, the loss of the item of \$4, 500 for a lecturer to the selected teachers would appear to be contrary to both Dominion and Provincial intent. I am sure that Ottawa will allow the item unreservedly. I would ask you reconsideration of it at the Provincial level.⁵¹⁷

In fact, the correspondence that ensues from Stokes' request shows that it was not just the provincial government that was having some reservations about the Forest Hill Village Project, but that there were also still some concerns in the Federal Department of Health. These concerns seemed to focus around a suspicion that the university was attempting to siphon too much of the mental health funding toward nebulous affiliations to the project from the far corners of the university. In turn, the federal government was concerned that this process was reorienting the project away from the provision of services to the public, and moving it more toward academic research. The transmission of the responsibility for the project to the university had the advantage of relieving the government of exposure in a field as sensitive as mental health, but it also carried with it the danger that nothing would actually be done with the money but pay the salaries of idle academic types.

The federal government's general "opinion" in regard to the request of Dr. Stokes for the monies promised for a lecturer in the Department of Education was that, since the "Forest Hill project is already being oversubsidized, there seems to be no justification for increasing the funds allocated for this activity".⁵¹⁸ Apparently, it was not only the Department of Psychiatry on behalf of the Department of Education that was seeking additional funds, but other university departments, in particular the Department of Social Work, was attempting to piggy back on the funding for the Forest Hill Village Project. At least, that was the way Federal officials in the Department of Health saw it:

⁵¹⁷ Stokes to Cameron, July 19, 1950, Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973, RG10-22, File 117.

⁵¹⁸ Cameron to Stokes, August 5, 1950, Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973, RG10-22, File 117.

It would seem that the sum of nearly \$24, 000, already allocated to the Forest Hill Village Project should not only be considered a maximum, but we might well look into its utilization. It is difficult to construe that the requested item of \$1000, can be anything other than a means to obtain further subsidy for the Department of Social Work on the excuse of an association with the Forest Hill Village project section of the Department of Psychiatry.⁵¹⁹

Stodgill, in the Mental Health Division, seemed to be apprised of the general concern in the Federal Department of Health that funding was going astray in the University in the course of implementing the project. He commented on this in a letter to Jack Griffin:

I must get to Toronto in the near future in order to see the Forest Hill Village Project in operation. I have a feeling that the emphasis has become one of research rather than training and I would like to get this straight.⁵²⁰

These same concerns were shared by the Ministry of Health in the Provincial Government. J. T. Phair, Deputy Minister of Health for the Province of Ontario, was the point man for delivering governmental concerns to the university. In a letter to Claude Bissel, then Assistant to the President, Phair expresses a need for clarification of the nature of the Forest Hill Village Project in regard to “what services are being provided”. The bureaucrats make a clear distinction between services, which they expect are forthcoming from the Project, and research, in regard to which they seem to set less store. Phair too writes about the need for more information from the university about the research component of the Forest Hill Village Project:

We understand that one aspect of the activity is research. If this is correct, might we be informed as to what research is being carried out, since we do not have any facts in this regard.⁵²¹

Finally, because of the amount of money being put toward the Forest Hill Village Project, which was “not insignificant”, the Ontario Deputy Minister requested that the university identify a timetable of “the possible duration of the Forest Hill Project”.

In a lengthy reply to the concerns expressed by federal and provincial officials as to how their money was being spent by the university, Claude Bissel wrote on behalf of the President, Sydney Smith, to the effect that the real problem was not any lack of clarity on the part of the University about the

⁵¹⁹ Cameron to Stokes, August 5, 1950, Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973, RG10-22, File 117.

⁵²⁰ Stodgill to Griffin, August 20, 1950 Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973, RG10-22, File 117.

⁵²¹ Phair to Bissel, September 15, 1950, Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973, RG10-22, File 117.

Forest Hill Village Project, but rather that the endless bureaucratic red tape from Ottawa and Queen's Park were obstructing the flow of information. In particular, Bissel argued that the multiple demands of the different departments of the university for funding, which might appear to be some kind of gravy-train effect, was really forced on the University by the labyrinthine demands of governmental paper work:

The amount of administrative detail involved in the Mental Health Grant has been so great that this office has found it necessary, in one or two particular instances, to suggest to the Department Heads involved that they should make their own separate approaches. Besides the amount of administrative detail, there was another factor that made for the adoption of this expedient. In view of the delay in implementing the budget through both provincial and federal channels, there was little time left for submitting amendments considered vital to the operation of the Project. From conversations the President and I have had with you, I am sure that the Department of Health appreciates the peculiar urgency of this problem.⁵²²

Aside from shifting the blame back to the government, the University administration did promise, according to Bissel, that the Forest Hill Project would be of limited duration as the agreement for its implementation with the Forest Hill Schools Board was "in the neighbourhood of five years". Indeed, this time-commitment was kept by the Department of Psychiatry with the Forest Hill Village Project winding down in 1953, precisely five years after it was begun in the fall of 1948. Bissel also reiterated that the Project was being centrally coordinated through the Department of Psychiatry:

It is the Department of Psychiatry that is chiefly concerned with the operation of the Project. Almost all of the money allocated through the Mental Health Training Budget for the Project comes through the Department of Psychiatry....⁵²³

This ensured that the power over this educational initiative remained in the hands of Stokes and Seeley in the Department of Psychiatry, which must remain quite an anomaly in the history of Canadian education. In closing, Bissel promised in flowery terms that there were high expectations for the work of the Forest Hill Project:

As Chairman of the Mental Health Programme, I give it as my considered opinion that no aspect of the whole Mental Health Programme is more central, nor has made, and will continue to make, a

⁵²² Bissel to Phair, September 31, 1950, Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973, RG10-22, File 117.

⁵²³ Bissel to Phair, September 31, 1950, Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973, RG10-22, File 117.

more significant contribution to both training and research in the Mental Health field than the Forest Hill Project.⁵²⁴

Nevertheless, no amount of rhetoric could disguise the fact that in the background of the operations of the Forest Hill Project, there were significant tensions over funding arrangements between the university administration and Federal and Provincial governments. Though the paper trail on these issues runs dry after the forceful response of the university, the consternation that Stokes will later demonstrate in his correspondence with Seeley regarding delays in the completion of *Crestwood Heights*, suggests that they continued to simmer in the background. In the following letter of June 17th, 1955 from Stokes to Seeley, we see the exasperation Stokes felt at these delays because of the pressure he was under to show that the investment by the powers-that-be in the project had borne fruit:

We would all wish, I think, to clear up the publication of *Crestwood Heights*. It is now seven years since the project started, one year to get it under way, two years of observation and 3 ½ years of preparation for publication. You will appreciate that I am under considerable pressure from the funding bodies to report, and the University, from the point of view of contribution to new knowledge, is properly enquiring as to the present position....⁵²⁵

5. The Informants

i) White Clad Doctors

To picture the Forest Hill Village Project in action, one might tend to conjure an image of white clad doctors patrolling the halls of the school and terrified students being sent down to a brightly lit, glassy, and white walled room 101. One might imagine Seeley as an Orwellian figure sitting in bemused judgment while students struggle through torturous psychological inquisitions. As we have seen, Seeley projected his self-doubts onto the professional psychological worker when he wrote in *Crestwood Heights* about the danger that psychological expertise could be used for ill:

It was hoped that a “professionally specialized person” might be able to conduct such classes in the schools, and if properly trained, he would safeguard the process against the perversion to sadistic uses of which it is clearly capable.⁵²⁶

⁵²⁴ Bissel to Phair, September 31, 1950, Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973, RG10-22, File 117.

⁵²⁵ Stokes to Seeley, June 17th, 1955, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁵²⁶ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 427.

There is some evidence in the research notes taken by the Forest Hill Village Project Staff that, in fact, at least some of these professionally specialized people did not always live up to expectations. For example, one such note observes an encounter between an expert and a student in less than flattering terms:

I believe he is quite opinionated – sure that he’s correct. He feels he’s quite a psychologist and a lover of children, although I don’t notice any particular rapport between him and his pupils. He always seems pretty authoritarian to me. I was in his office today when one of his pupils came in crying – sent there by D.N. I thought I’d practice reflecting the boy’s feelings to him. He responded by pouring out his strong dislike of a classmate who was always bullying him and others. When D. N. came in the boy did not make much of a case for himself, partly perhaps because his original strong emotions had subsided. D. N. didn’t give him much chance to state his side or to draw him out – accused him of being the trouble maker and of swearing and sent him home. I refrained from comment.

This was an interview on the role of the specialist....The whole interview reinforces the opinion that D. N. believes in advanced educational views, believes he is a good psychologist – and can possibly carry out many of his ideas except in actual face to face dealings with the children.⁵²⁷

We should explain at this point that Sim and Seeley developed a code by which the real identities of the persons involved in the Forest Hill Village Project, as referred to in their notes and in *Crestwood Heights*, would be known only to them. Now, it is certainly true that, “D.N.”, in this episode showed a lack of understanding of the therapeutic value of an empathic milieu for the student having difficulty with his work, but this incident hardly amounts to a charge of sadistic misuse. Such petty daily forms of oppression must help embed in the general population the expectation of their own powerlessness, but while this diminishes their capacity for self-expression, it is not likely to have been traumatic.

To add further evidence to the suggestion that the Forest Hill Village Project was no more virulent in its effect on the children than any other educational initiative, we need only turn to the memories of those who attended the school at the time. Though such people are few and far between nearly sixty years later, those who were available to comment hardly even remember the Forest Hill Village Project. One of them reported vague memories of Seeley, “sitting in his room at the front office writing his book”. Another said:

I don’t remember Dr. Seeley much at all – I have a vague mental picture of what he looked like, which may or may not be accurate. I was in elementary school (South Prep) and the study may have

⁵²⁷ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

continued into my Junior years...

I do recall the impression that he was at times subjective and judgmental, and asked us, through his questionnaires, to be the same, whether he realized it or not. Questions like, “who do you like the most and who do you like the least in your class, and why”? I had never thought in those terms before, and I believe it was damaging to the way we looked at our classmates.⁵²⁸

Perhaps these notes and vague memories do suggest that some feelings of intrusiveness were invoked in the students by their experience of the Forest Hill Village Project. That is, we would not reach this conclusion given the evidence at hand, though it might be possible to speculate that these small signs of trouble point towards a certain level of social control at work in the Forest Hill Village Project.

ii) Clayton Ruby

The nature of Seeley’s relationship with the students in the Forest Hill Schools during his tenure as Director of the Forest Hill Village Project is hard to get at behind such vague memories. However, there was one student who was in the schools at the time of the Project with whom he would become quite close. Through a look at Seeley’s relationship with Clayton Ruby we might get a more general insight into how he approached his students at the time of the Forest Hill Village Project. We might also gain greater insight into the special rapport Seeley was reputedly able to achieve with the young. Seeley’s relationship with Ruby might suggest that his personal magnetism was not only an effect of his students’ youthful need for idealization, but also a response to measures Seeley took to cultivate a following.

One might compare Clayton Ruby in his role as a protégé, to Seeley himself in his relationship with Fischer. Like Seeley, Ruby was also an intellectually gifted Jewish boy who felt estranged from his family and was in search of a father figure with whom he could identify. Ruby was just ten, and in grade four or five in the Forest Hill Schools system while the Project was going on. According to Ruby, like many others who attended the Forest Hill Schools at the time, he has no specific memories of the Project and how it affected him. Still, it may have been possible that Seeley had first encountered Ruby during the days of the Forest Hill Village Project. He certainly had the opportunity while reading to the children at the elementary school library, or conducting a human relations class to Forest Hill kids in grade four.

According to Ruby, his father Louis was the son of poor Jewish immigrants from Poland who had managed to eke out their survival on a “few acres of rock” in Quebec. Of course, growing up on a

⁵²⁸ Personal Interview with Margot (Hill) Wojciechowski, 28 September 2010

farm, Louis Ruby “had no money” of his own and was forced to “go out and work”, to provide for his wife and thirteen children. This did not leave him much time to focus on the needs of a son with literary interests like Clayton. As a result, Clayton turned to Seeley as a more “literate father figure”. According to Ruby he first started to become friends with Seeley in 1958 when he was around sixteen years old and a student at Forest Hill Collegiate. Ruby said that he had sought out Seeley because even at such an early age he had already developed an interest in social psychiatry and he had heard that Seeley was an expert in this area. Ruby greatly admired and identified with Seeley’s intellect. He described Seeley as “a classic polymath” whose scores on standard IQ tests were “un-measurable”. He recalls Seeley playing bridge constantly, knowing every intricacy of the game, and between hands worrying over the eternal paradoxes of mathematics. Ruby said that Seeley was “the kindest, wisest man”, he ever knew.

Yet, there was something a bit unusual about the relationship that emerged between Ruby and his substitute father figure, at least from today’s perspective. It seems strange that an elder male would make time for regular private meetings with a high school aged boy outside of any professional or familial obligations. Seeley wasn’t Clayton Ruby’s uncle, teacher, psychoanalyst or rabbi, nor was he in any way qualified to serve in any of these capacities. But, the nature of their relationship may be more comprehensible when we consider that Ruby and Seeley were intellectuals for whom it was often difficult to find others who were like-minded. In another strange coincidence, Ruby said he did not even know that Seeley was Jewish. Ruby had understood only that Seeley’s family had been “refugee’s from Germany who had settled in England”, which was part of the truth. Ruby did recollect Seeley speculating about overhearing his Grandmother rambling in Yiddish. But Ruby said that he did not pry into this area because Seeley was “sensitive about religion”. It is again rather singular that this question of Jewishness was left unexplored by Seeley and Ruby because it is another example of how Seeley was drawn to other Jews all the while denying his heritage. It is also a noteworthy coincidence that Ruby sought out a Jewish professor to play the role of “second father” in his life.

Now, according to Ruby, during his last years of high school he started meeting privately with Seeley in Oxford-style tutorials, “not connected to classes”. During these tutorials Ruby said the boy and his tutor “talked about everything on earth”.⁵²⁹ They continued this tutorial style relationship through to Ruby’s first years as a student at York University where Seeley was teaching at the time. When considering the trajectory of this didactically oriented relationship, the question immediately comes to

⁵²⁹ Interview with Clayton Ruby, 20 February 2010

mind as to what Ruby's real father must have thought about it? Did Louis Ruby not feel any sense of competitive rivalry in response to Seeley's emerging prominence in his son's life? This prompts a deeper look into the personal history of Louis Ruby which reveals the startling fact that, rather than working in a local Jewish textile operation as I had imagined, he was in fact the publisher of a racy tabloid magazine called *Flash*.

In fact, according to Will Straw, who wrote about Louis Ruby in his article, "Traffic in Scandal: The Story of the Broadway Brevities", Louis and his brother Morris had formerly gone by the last name "Rubin". The Rubin brothers were both involved in the profitable business of tabloid publishing in Toronto between the wars. Of course, in the repressive political climate of the Depression era, this kind of publication attracted the attention of local political authorities, and Morris Rubin and his associates ended up in court. According to Straw, Morris was charged in 1938 for his involvement in the "publication of obscene matter tending to corrupt morals", contrary to the Criminal Code of Canada. However, the charges against Rubin were dropped in January of 1938 because of insufficient evidence. The government's failure to prove its case in court only led to a more vigorous campaign to control such publications by other means. In response, it seems, Morris Rubin and his brother Louis changed their name to Ruby:

In 1938 Morris Rubin disappeared from the public record and the name Morris Ruby began to appear as the man responsible for the Tattle tabloids....Morris Ruby was the brother of Louis Ruby who ran Super Publications in the 1940s and published the Toronto tabloid 'Flash' – the claim that Morris Ruby had been Morris Rubin obviously presupposes that his brother had made a similar change of name.⁵³⁰

This background in regard to Clayton Ruby's father's business associations may shed some light on his son's relationship with Seeley. As it happened, Seeley's own father had been involved in socially-unacceptable business dealing as well, and was also frequently unavailable. On the other hand, it was not true that Clayton's own father was without literary qualities. In fact, in some ways the depression-era tabloids were more far-sighted and progressive than the mainstream media:

Hush, *National Tattler* and the *Tattler Review* all spoke with a determined anti-Nazi, pro-war voice; denunciations of anti-semitism were much more common within their pages than in those of the mainstream Toronto dailies.⁵³¹

⁵³⁰ Will Straw, "'Traffic in Scandal': The Story of Broadway Brevities", *University of Toronto Quarterly*, Volume 73, Number 4, Fall 2004, 34.

⁵³¹ Straw, "Traffic in Scandal", 35.

The mainstream media was obviously controlled by Gentiles and reflected their more authoritarian, class and race based social values, in contrast to the tabloid press which was likely the only field of journalism open to Jews in Toronto at the time. From this perspective we could say that Clayton came by his interest in civil rights issues honestly. In a way, he has followed in his father's footsteps as one of Canada's most prominent civil rights lawyers most famous for his defense of a free press. However, Clayton may have been ashamed of the compromises his father had made to survive in the literary field. Ironically, he turned to Seeley for legitimacy, but as an illustration of how deeply processes of identification embed themselves in the personalities of children, Clayton may have inadvertently associated himself with another man with tendencies toward imposture.

According to Ruby, Seeley preferred a tutorial method for learning because it could be easily adjusted to mimic the psychoanalytic-learning model. He believed that the intense, open relationship between analyst and analysand acts as the fulcrum on the basis of which learning can occur. Fittingly, Seeley and Ruby focused in their tutorials on psychoanalytic theory. In fact, Ruby said that at the time he bought for himself the complete works of Freud. It would appear, then, that Seeley attempted to construct an artificial psychoanalytic relationship with Ruby just as he had done with Martin Fischer. The only difference was that Seeley himself played the role of doctor in his relationship with Ruby, a sign of the power he had gained over the young man.

Ruby's emphasis on the psychoanalytic nature of his relationship with Seeley is important evidence of how Seeley saw his educational project, from the time of the Forest Hill Village Project to his role in the founding of York University, as an experiment in psychoanalytic pedagogy. Ruby said in his interview with me that for Seeley, "Psychoanalysis was a model for the teaching relationship".⁵³² On the one hand, the felt benefits of the psychoanalytic pedagogy Seeley employed as Clayton Ruby's tutor must be acknowledged. On the other hand, we must also heed Foucault's warning that psychoanalytic techniques may be looked at as modernized versions of a, "power of the pastoral type", that, "implies knowledge of the conscience and an ability to direct it".⁵³³ In this context, it is perhaps noteworthy that Ruby's recollections of being taught about Freud by Seeley are so reminiscent of the way that Seeley would speak of his relationship with the teacher at Henfield with whom he studied the collected works of Euclid.

⁵³² Interview with Clayton Ruby, 20 February 2010

⁵³³ Foucault, *The Subject and Power*, 132

Even if, from the part-of-the-day Foucauldian perspective, there were elements of power at work in the relationship between Seeley and Ruby, there is no doubt that they enjoyed the Socratic dialogue in which they were engaged. Perhaps Ruby needed someone to play the role of Aristotle to his Alexander. For his part, it was important to Seeley to be recognized as a great teacher by such a talented student. Seeley longed for such validation of his importance because, like Ruby himself to some extent, he had not had enough love and recognition when he needed it as a child. He had not experienced the gleam in a parent's eyes. Seeley's vulnerabilities in this regard may have inclined him to seek such approval in the eyes of children and youth rather than in those of other adults who were potentially more threatening. He therefore worked very hard to earn the admiration of the young, and as we see in Clayton Ruby's view of Seeley as the "leading figure in education in those decades", the young rewarded him for it.

ii) Child Guidance Clinic

One other way to understand the general amnesia of the subjects of the Forest Hill Village Project about its impact is on the basis that it was mainly the teachers themselves, not the doctors or psychologists, who conducted the "Human Relations Classes", which were the core of the project insofar as it was carried out in the schools. This is established in the Ph. D. thesis of Thomas Mallinson entitled, *An Experimental Investigation of Group-Directed Discussion in the Classroom*, which was based on his role as a member of the Forest Hill Village Project staff:

The discussion leaders for the experiment were, for the most part, those teachers involved in the in-service training program inspired and aided by the Canadian Mental Health Association.⁵³⁴

Students at Forest Hill Collegiate during the project were therefore exposed to the less than memorable experience of a new teaching technique, and perhaps some new teachers, but not to the kind of exercises in Orwellian thought-control that we might fear. Now, we might expect that students would have remembered the human relations classes because they were exceptionally permissive in contrast to the generally controlled and conformist atmosphere of the fifties. On the other hand, the fact that this left very little impression on them may not come as such a surprise when one considers that teachers are often criticized for the bizarre complexity they bring to what, in the final analysis, amounts to the rather predictable and mundane reality of day-to-day teaching. Moreover, these special classes convened only once per week, and only for those few classes chosen as part of the experimental group in contrast to the control group. Indeed, at this distance in time

⁵³⁴ Thomas Mallinson, *An Experimental Investigation of Group-Directed Discussion in the Classroom*, Unpublished Ph.d. Thesis, 1955, Department of Psychology, University of Toronto Archives

from the events it would be hard to find the few who might still even remotely remember their experience in human relations classes at Forest Hill Collegiate.

However, there was another side to the “service” component of the Forest Hill Village Project, where the white-clad doctors of our imagination did actually enter the schools. This was called the “Child Guidance Clinic” set up at the new high school building. As we have already seen, the clinic was put under the leadership of pioneering female U of T Psychiatrist, Dr. Lila Frances Coates (Maltby). Seeley described the guidance clinic in detail in an article he co-authored with Griffin in 1952, while the project was still underway:

The Service aspect is designed to meet the expressed needs of the school system in connection with the professional mental health services, both therapeutic and preventive in nature. To begin with, this meant the provision of a formal mental health or child guidance clinic comprising the traditional team of psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, psychiatric social worker, and secretary. This has been made available on a full time basis for work in the schools through the Department of Psychiatry of the University of Toronto. In a school system in which there are only 2, 000 children one might well ask whether a full time clinic of this nature is justifiable. It must be remembered however, that this is an experiment to see what would happen if an attempt were made to provide relatively generous mental health services according to our present state of knowledge. It is interesting that this clinic has hitherto had no difficulty in keeping fully occupied providing therapy for those children who are showing the early signs of breakdown – in most cases well before the breakdown has become too serious.⁵³⁵

Yet, even here, it would seem, the impact on students was not as great, or as beneficial, as Seeley’s account would suggest. The minutes from a “Meeting of the Liaison Officers” on February 17th, 1949, suggest that from the outset of the project there was a problem of the availability of the medical doctors and psychologists to the teaching staff and students. Either they were not able to always juggle their various professional obligations, or they fell into the almost-inevitable tendency to spend most of their time working with teachers and guidance counsellors. This I believe is the implication of the following excerpt from these minutes:

Clinic

The group appreciates the difficulties and practical problems that have been met with in the setting up of the Clinic. However, they hope that it will be possible for them to get considerable clinical experience in Forest Hill Village, and if possible, in other clinics before the end of the year.

Counselling

It is the opinion of the group that the efforts in this area have been for the most part successful, and that the Forest Hill Village people are impressed with its value. There is, however, an opinion that if

⁵³⁵ John D. Griffin, *In Search of Sanity*, 141.

some method might be worked out whereby the counseling teams would have contact with students themselves, the value of the programme might be enhanced.⁵³⁶

The complaint that the professional U of T medical personnel and professors assigned to the Forest Hill Village Project were often too busy to be available as needed was one that endured throughout the Project. According to an academic follow-up study out of Queen's University on the efficacy of the Forest Hill Village Project entitled, "Mental Health in Education: An Evaluation of a Special Mental Health Training Program for Selected Teachers":

It was felt disappointing, for example, that so often....a course of talks and discussions would be announced to be taken by a certain lecturer as a regular, say weekly feature. This lecturer would then often be called away at that time on some other job or duty, and the whole course, so eagerly looked forward to, was felt thwarting and disappointing to the class....One year, too, felt that its course was being made up as it went along, and however good this may have been as an experiment, it must have failed of some of its purpose when no explanation was forthcoming about vagueness, changes of plan, or rather unplanned spells.⁵³⁷

On the basis of this evidence, it might very well have been that frequent absences of the staff was as much a problem for the clinic as it was for the CMHA training program for teachers. However, there are very few references in the historical documents remaining from the Forest Hill Village Project to events in the guidance clinic on which to base any firm conclusions about its workings. The last mention in the "Seeley Papers" to the clinic records reports their being left in the basement of the Toronto Psychiatry Hospital at 2 Surrey Place on the campus of U of T. In a letter from Tom Mallinson to Seeley dated to January 16th, 1956, the year that *Crestwood Heights* was finally published, he speaks of this "dead material":

I am planning to put most of the "dead" material (eg., Maltby files, Sim Records, etc...) into cartons and store them in the TPH basement....⁵³⁸

The "Maltby files" mentioned here would be the "Child Guidance Clinic" files as Dr. Lila Frances (Coates) Maltby was in charge of the clinic. In *Crestwood Heights* there is listed in the acknowledgements of "Contributory Studies", a "Report on Work of the Clinical Team, Crestwood Heights Schools Child Guidance Services", by L.F. Maltby. This report might presumably have been included amongst her other files, but these files cannot be traced in any Canadian archive. Indeed, according to the book that chronicles the history of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital:

⁵³⁶ Minutes from a Meeting of the Liaison Officers, Forest Hill Village Project, February 17, 1949, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Archives

⁵³⁷ Dr. Isabel Laird, "Mental Health in Education", Archives of Ontario, RG-10-22, File 138, 605-5-1979. 1955, B440019

⁵³⁸ Tom Mallinson to John R. Seeley, Jan 16th 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

The archives of TPH have largely disappeared. Although the records of individual patients have been preserved, the administrative correspondence on which the history of such a hospital would normally be based has vanished.⁵³⁹

This conclusion would seem to be borne out by my own experience. When I visited 2 Surrey Place, originally the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital, I was told by the librarians working there as part of the current Surrey Place Centre for Education and Research on Developmental Disabilities, that there was nothing left in the basement of that building but an empty crawl space. All the old files were gone.

As a result, we know very little about this report, aside from what was extracted from it in *Crestwood Heights*, and the references to it by the authors in their notes. However, we do know that Seeley did not like it. In a typical moment of anger and frustration with his colleagues, Seeley is recorded by Fischer as having referred to it as the, “Shitty report of Dr. Maltby’s”.⁵⁴⁰ This suggests that rather than disappearing, the report was deliberately buried, but why would this have been the case? What was revealed or not revealed in the clinic files?

In *Crestwood Heights* it is suggested that part of what the clinic did was to organize and supervise counseling teams made up of teaching staff who would work with students that presented with mental health issues. In the context of discussing the historical shift toward the increasing responsibility assumed by the school for the emotional as well as the academic education of students, the authors of *Crestwood Heights* observed:

The acceptance and use of the Child Guidance Clinic, the organization of counselling teams and its own teacher-operated counseling system bear witness to the schools extension of interest.⁵⁴¹

There is also a reference to the content of the “Maltby Report” in a quite suggestive Forest Hill Village Project staff memo written by Norm Bell, who was a junior researcher working on his Master’s Degree as a student in the U of T Department of Political Economy. Bell’s memo was entitled, “A Note on Emotionally Disturbing Triads”. In this memo Bell speculates that the perceived weaknesses of the clinic were due to its mode of operation. Bell cites an article by Alfred Stanton and Morris Schwartz entitled, “Institutional Participation in Mental Illness”, which “relates outbursts of patients on a psychiatric ward to certain interpersonal processes amongst staff members”, as a possible model on the basis of which to analyse problems faced in the Forest Hill “Child Guidance

⁵³⁹ Shorter ed., *TPH: History and Memories of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital*, IX.

⁵⁴⁰ Fischer’s Notes, November, 15, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

⁵⁴¹ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 243.

Clinic”. These processes, according to the article, are usually triangular situations which Bell describes in the following way:

The process briefly is one of differences of opinion about the patient between two people who differ in status and involvement, with the difference coming into the open or being recognized. This is the quiet stage. It is followed by open disagreement, at which point the patient outburst occurs. In the resulting conflict the division is solidified and appeal is made to a larger group. The one unsuccessful in appeal, who becomes a minority, tends to flee from the situation, often by resigning, but this can be averted by authority forcing the two combatants to thrash out their difference of opinion.

Bell goes on to suggest that if similar, “such processes are identifiable, they would seem to lend much to our explanations of the dynamics of clinic, school, and family behavior which are often rather weak”.⁵⁴² If we now follow Bell’s application of the ideas in Stanton’s article to the situation at the Forest Hill Collegiate “Child Guidance Clinic”, we do get an insight into how it operated, and what went wrong, that is never revealed in *Crestwood Heights*:

Now let us trace the analogous process in the clinic-parent-child situation. The child is already a “patient”. The parents are deeply involved emotionally and interested in the patient on personal grounds. The clinic disagrees with the way the parents operate – and it always does insofar as it considers parents as involved in the child’s emotional problem. So far the process resembles the quiet period. At the point where the clinic tries to make the parent be committed to involvement in the clinic, the difference in opinion is brought into the open (the therapeutic process relative to the parent). In many cases the clinic’s operation breaks down here. The parent refuses to become involved and withdraws, or more often, hesitates and wavers to the extent that the clinic withdraws.

If the parent does become involved the difference is tackled, or the difference becomes disagreement, perhaps depending on the respective estimations of themselves and the other by parent and clinic. Very often it seems that rather than working out the differences, combat is closed.⁵⁴³

Bell goes on to emphasize the important point that he sees the evidence of the clinic as showing that it did frequently fail in its mission, and he wondered if it was because of such triangulations as he has described:

Is the notably poor success of the clinic due to the fact it unwittingly gets caught in triangles which it doesn’t understand and can’t handle?⁵⁴⁴

Bell offers a particular example from the clinic files to demonstrate that his analysis may have merit:

⁵⁴² Norm Bell, “A Note on Emotionally Disturbing Triads”, January 12th, 1952 Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁵⁴³ Norm Bell, “A Note on Emotionally Disturbing Triads”, January 12th, 1952 Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁵⁴⁴ Norm Bell, “A Note on Emotionally Disturbing Triads”, January 12th, 1952 Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

A recent case that of Jonnie Gould, looks as though it might lend weight to the theory. There the mother is separated from the father and is having difficulty reaching a divorce agreement. Mrs Gould has recurrent crises and the son has frequent upsets.⁵⁴⁵

Crestwood Heights does not build on the critical perspective of the Clinic's work set up here by Bell. Instead it uses the evidence from the clinic to support the main thrust of the mental hygiene movement in favour of more permissive teaching and parenting. From the perspective of Bell's analysis, this may not have been the right approach in so far as he seems to suggest that a better outcome for the child was more likely if the clinic brought the weight of its authority to bear in order to push the student and his parents to deal with the problem, rather than avoid it.

Alex Sim also offered a critique of the Maltby report in his notes. He felt that it placed too much emphasis on the mental health problems associated with the traditional patriarchal model of parenting. He saw this as rooted in the Freudian emphasis on underlying oedipal conflicts in parent-child relations. He was apparently reaching for something more along the lines of a neo-freudian emphasis on the cultural determinants of neurosis in the following comment:

As to the content of psychopathology, I am convinced, despite the material in the clinic files, that the traditional content of the neuroses, with stern father induced superego's in conflict with relatively unknown, surgent, sex-and-aggression-oriented ids, is a largely disappearing phenomenon pointing to a survival of passing attitudes and practices; the new phenomenon is a much less sharp, much more a generalized malaise, much closer to underorganization and indefiniton than to overorganization of sharply defined incompatibles.⁵⁴⁶

Another criticism of the "Child Guidance Clinic", in addition to that of Bell or Sim, may be located at a broader societal level in Brian Low's suggestion, reviewed earlier in the chapter on the historiography of Seeley's career, that it was because of the permissive stance taken by the mental hygiene movement generally that the explosion of adolescent omnipotence referred to as the "hippie movement" took place in the sixties. This counter-cultural predilection for permissive parenting on the part of the mental health community in the fifties might suggest a performative contradiction between the authoritarian style of many psychiatrists from that era and what they advocated in child rearing. Unless, that is, it might be argued there was no such tension because in promoting more permissive parenting the psychiatric profession was, in effect, undermining the power of parents and increasing its own professional power to replace them with psychoanalysis, psychotherapy, or mental

⁵⁴⁵ Norm Bell, "A Note on Emotionally Disturbing Triads", January 12th, 1952 Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁵⁴⁶ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

hygiene. It was also serving the interests of the neo-liberal post-war economic order in creating a market of eager and pliable consumers.

In sum, this review of the evidence in regard to the activities of the Forest Hill “Child Guidance Clinic” suggests that contrary to what might be imagined, the reality of the Project in the hallways of the schools was neither the terrorizing of innocent children, nor their salvation. Instead the kids were given more latitude than ever before. This was empowering, but may also have had the effect of freezing their development at the adolescent stage. The real anxiety caused by the Forest Hill Village Project seems to have been experienced above all by the adults involved. Fathers rushing to the school to put a stop to some psychiatric intervention in their child’s upbringing; teachers complaining, as usual, that they are being infantilized by the so-called professionals; doctors, rushed off their feet, as usual, now expected to not only cure bodies but also minds. In other words, we might speculate that as the project unfolded the intensifying anxiety of its leader, John R. Seeley, resonated out into the experience of those under his supervision.

iii) Human Relations Classes

The grandiose self-understanding of the Project would have unsettled anyone. Such unease was already apparent in the reaction to early drafts of the project. The hopes of federal bureaucrats that transferring the project from CNCMH to the U of T Department of Psychiatry might have narrowed the focus of “Mental Health for Canada” were dashed when it became clear that the real effect of this move was to add a theoretical layer on top of the original training and therapeutic aims. Not only this, the effect of the move to the U of T Department of Psychiatry was in fact to prioritize the latter aim at the expense of the former. Seeley made this point more than clear in *Crestwood Heights* where he wrote that: “investigation and discovery, and not action and therapy, were our primary concern”.⁵⁴⁷ Yet this is precisely what the federal bureaucrats had not wanted to happen, perhaps demonstrating how little power they had over the project once the funding was transferred.

It might also indicate how much control Seeley had managed to gain over the project. Margery King, who had worked in a secretarial capacity on the project for the CMHA, suggested in interviews that there was dissatisfaction amongst the leadership at the CMHA with the ways that Seeley had “gone off in his own direction” with the Forest Hill Project.⁵⁴⁸ Shifting to an academic focus, when it came

⁵⁴⁷ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 17.

⁵⁴⁸ Personal Interview with Margery King, 12 November 2009

down to it, might have served Seeley just fine because, as he claimed in his letters to Everett Hughes, he felt that theoretical work was his greatest strength. He certainly did have a great skill in conceptual architecture. However, the absence of a research basis for his writing always seemed to make his theoretical structures rather hollow at their core. Just as he had an aversion to the hard slogging of research, so must he have had an aversion to the mundane daily commitments of the clinic, classroom or researcher's note-pad. It would have been much easier for Seeley to churn out grand schemes in staff memos from the safety of his desk. This of course would impress his peers without having to give away the fact that he hadn't done any work, and leave him time to pursue his Machiavellian scheming.

At a practical level, Seeley accomplished this shift to a theoretical plane through the elegant insight that the research and the therapeutic strands of the project might easily be conceived of as mutually reinforcing rather than distinct. This would be true if the human relations classes offered in the schools were made the central focus of the project. In a memo, "in partial reply to and in extension of Mr. Sim's of 10 September 1950 which I have taken the liberty of numbering 50-A-1", Seeley writes:

Most of the points made have been covered verbally, but it seems desirable to get them onto paper for further discussion....I think it should be clearly recognizable that we are making two studies. (a) a study of selected effects of Human Relations Classes; and, (b) a study of Forest Hill Village as a community with special reference to the formation of personality, and with primary concentration on the school (and the home) as agents therein. It should seem expedient to discuss problems related to study (a) in a series of memoranda separate from this, but in dismissing this study for separate consideration, we must not neglect to recognize that the content of H. R. Classes discussion provides material of the highest relevance for study.⁵⁴⁹

Here the heavy influence of psychoanalysis on Seeley's thinking reveals itself. Just as Freud had sought to use the psychoanalytical method with his individual patients as much for the exploration of cultural and psychological phenomena as for the cure of particular neurotic symptoms; Seeley sought to gain access to the mind and culture of Forest Hill through the group psychoanalysis of children in the schools. Seeley made this quite clear in the chapter of *Crestwood Heights* entitled "The Starting Point". Here, Seeley explained the ways in which the Forest Hill Village Project was intended as an experiment in mass psychoanalysis:

It will be recognized from what has been said that the Project as a whole may be viewed as a species of attempted social therapy; the specific research methods for this volume have marked analogies with psychotherapy – analogies that must be pressed.

⁵⁴⁹ Staff Memorandum, No 50-3-1, September 15, 1950, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

Just as the therapist has a “patient who comes to him for help” so we had a community that came to us for help. Just as the therapist, at the outset, knows only in the vaguest way what it may be that is troubling his patient, so we of the research staff knew only in the vaguest way, at the outset, what was troubling the community in which we were to operate. Just as the therapist assumes that what his patient says has some relationship, but not necessarily a direct relationship, to the problem with which that patient is coping, so we assumed that what people in the community said and did could tell us something about that community and what was problematic in it, though, like the therapist, we would not assume that the patient knew what his problem was. Just as the therapist assumes that the patient will benefit by a clarification of what has actually happened in his life hitherto and is happening now, so we assumed that the community could benefit by a similar attempt at clarification. And lastly, we assumed, just as the therapist does, that a by-product of this activity would be a story of the patient’s life as seen from the patient’s viewpoint and corrected in the light of any objective evidence available. Like the therapist, we started with “what was on the patient’s mind” – whatever the community wanted to tell us about, in the light of their definition of our interests; and, again like him, we followed up these comments in relatively free association. Again, like the therapist, we assumed that if the process of communication continued long enough, the pattern or structure for which we and they were looking together would emerge with greater clarity.

Perhaps the technique used was manifest in greatest clarity in the “Human Relations Classes” conducted with the children. Here, generally, nothing more was said than, “we talk about a lot of things in school every day, but perhaps these are not all the things that you are interested in talking about. If you like, we will set aside an hour every week, for the rest of the school year to talk about all the things that you like. What we talk about and how we talk about it, will be up to you”. From these Human Relations classes we obtained, as already stated, a great deal of material....⁵⁵⁰

Thus, the Human Relations Classes took the form of “free discussion”, much along the lines of the psychoanalytical technique of free association. The students were free for one period a week at school to talk about whatever topic they wanted. Moreover, the teacher’s role was simply to assume a non-judgmental air that would allow as open a discussion as possible. The theory was that such talk therapy would prove itself to be therapeutic and, indirectly, also benefit the overall academic performance of the students in the experimental classes. It would seem that this psychoanalytical design of the project would have reflected Seeley’s preoccupations to a greater extent than anyone else involved. One would not expect that Stokes, Hincks, nor Griffin as men from the eugenicist school in psychiatry, would have been all that enthusiastic about psychoanalysis.

It would seem, as well, that Sim as the principal other to Seeley on the Forest Hill Project Staff was also not as inclined as Seeley toward a psychoanalytical approach to the Project. As the following excerpt from a memo he wrote to the staff suggests, Sim anticipated that the emphasis on “Human Relations Classes”, as an experiment with group psychoanalysis in schools would limit the Project’s scientific probity:

⁵⁵⁰ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 14-15.

It has already been suggested that the HR classes should be made the central focus of the study. This has some merit; it would be a means of limiting the numbers of persons to be considered; it is a group approach; the results would have important bearings on education and psychiatry alike. On the negative side, there is a danger that the work would be superficial and tricky, getting into technique etc....⁵⁵¹

But superficiality and trickiness were the hallmarks of Seeley's *modus operandi*. He was more comfortable in that space than he would have been with a more intensely academic approach that would emphasize, as Sims indicated, "detailed work on ecology, structure, class, etc..".⁵⁵² Thus, it served Seeley's interests in unencumbered speculative writing, and his desire to pursue his own psychoanalysis, to have the Forest Hill Village Project focus on the human relations classes. However, such a focus did not necessarily sit well with all the others involved in the Project. The elegance of Seeley's Freudian theoretical structures belied a practical tension between research and therapeutic aims. Perhaps a man of Freud's extraordinary creative energy and self-discipline could balance treating patients by day and theoretical work by night, not to mention finding time to spend with family and friends. As Seeley put it, "Freud was endlessly creative".⁵⁵³ But then, he needed to smoke a lot of cigars and, we should not forget, he never had to leave home, except for his daily walk through the streets of Vienna. In contrast, life in Toronto in the 1950s with its burgeoning highway systems and sprawling suburbs could not be so neatly organized. To complicate the working day with the need to find time for both research and clinical commitments in the classroom was likely far more stressful for the Forest Hill Village Project Staff than it had been for Freud. Not to mention the fact that as employees of massive modernist corporate structures like the University or the Hospital, the members of the Forest Hill Project Staff had to carefully sidle and finagle their way through these bureaucratic jungles on a daily basis.

However, the failure of Seeley's grand plan to make the human relations classes the central focus of the project hinged mainly on his competitive relationship with Thomas Mallinson. Along with Seeley and Sim, Mallinson was one of the early hires onto the Forest Hill Village Project Staff. Reference to his hiring is made in a letter from Aldwyn Stokes to Dr. MacFarlane, October 6th, 1948:

As ancillary to Mr. Seeley, a statistician, Mr. Thomas J. Mallinson (M.A.) is recommended at the rate of \$ 20.00 a week. (20 hours at \$1.00 per hour).⁵⁵⁴

⁵⁵¹ Sim, Notes re- Research Program, Sept 10th 1950, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁵⁵² Sim, Notes re- Research Program, Sept 10th 1950, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁵⁵³ Interviews with John R. Seeley

⁵⁵⁴ McFarlane to Stokes, October 6, 1948, Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973, RG10-22, File 117.

At the time Mallinson was working toward a Ph. D. in the U of T Psychology Department under the supervision of Bill Line. He was also serving as a part-time lecturer doing “research on psychological tests and methods” and also assisting with and teaching “several courses including Statistics, Tests and Methods, Analysis of data and other psychological studies”.⁵⁵⁵ Obviously, Mallinson’s skills in psychological testing would have stood him in good stead with the mental hygienists at the U of T Department of Psychology who had made professionalism in this field the basis for their rise to power in the Canadian military during the war. Moreover, much like Seeley, Blatz, and Griffin, having finished his B.A. at the University of British Columbia, Mallinson did a tour of duty amongst the elite of American academia, graduating with an M.A. degree in Psychology from Columbia University. This was quite an achievement for a lad born in Calgary in 1919 who worked in sales during the war, and who did not even begin his undergraduate education until he was twenty-eight years old. He explained his move into the academic world in the following way:

Following High School I entered the Industrial field, but found myself increasingly puzzled about Motivation – why people worked, and why they chose the occupation they did. It was to indulge this curiosity that I entered University...⁵⁵⁶

Obviously, he could not find the motivation he needed to succeed in the business world, but this was not the case in the world of academic psychology where he excelled. Here he distinguished himself from Seeley who never completed his M.A., let alone a Ph.D. Mallinson, in contrast, actually turned his role as statistician for the Forest Hill Village Project into a successful Ph. D. dissertation. Stokes recommended that Seeley attempt to do the same with *Crestwood Heights*. In, “a short note at Christmas time”, Stokes pressed Seeley on the Ph. D. issue:

Crestwood Heights seems to have good reviews and I take it the sales are not inconsiderable. The Press is delighted. Why not get it accepted as a Ph. D. thesis in Chicago?⁵⁵⁷

As we have seen in our account of Seeley’s letters to Everett Hughes at the University of Chicago, Stokes was not the only one encouraging Seeley at the time to make this effort. We may infer that, even though he originally hired Mallinson, the fact that Seeley failed to complete the Ph. D. and Mallinson succeeded likely became a source of tension in their relationship.

⁵⁵⁵ Notes, Simon Fraser University Archives, Thomas J Mallinson Fonds, F124-1-0-0,1.

⁵⁵⁶ Notes, Simon Fraser University Archives, Thomas J Mallinson Fonds, F124-1-0-0,1.

⁵⁵⁷ Stokes to Seeley, December 15, 1957, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

ii) Students Need Structure

At first, Mallinson does not seem to have been involved in the process of defining the techniques to be used in the human relations classes. After all, he was only a junior “statistician” on the Forest Hill Village Project staff. Of course, this would not stop him from latterly claiming a significant part in the formulation of this technique as his own work in his Ph. D. thesis. Seeley, on the other hand, was indeed a player in the early development of the human relations class methodology but, despite his grandiose claims, the early documents suggest, surprisingly, that his former superior at the Directorate of Personnel Selection, Dr. Bill Line, also played an important role.

There is one document in particular that is revealing around the early discussions of how the human relations classes were to be conducted. This was the minutes of a “meeting held on February 14th, 1949 at 4 pm, 111 St. George Street, in order to discuss the Human Relations Teaching at Forest Hill Village School”.⁵⁵⁸ We would do well to look first at Griffin’s account of the origins of the human relations classes, to provide some perspective on the subsequent work in this area. According to Griffin’s chronicle, it was he himself who could lay claim to having founded the idea of a human relations class as part of his work on the Regal Road School Project under his mentor Dr William Blatz:

....an experimental technique having potential for promoting mental health was introduced by Griffin in the senior grades of the public schools. Essentially this was a method of encouraging thoughtful discussion about human behavior. It had been designed for use in high schools by Professor Alice Keliher of Columbia University. A short excerpt from a film adapted from a commercial Hollywood picture was shown. The picture concerned children and their relationship with other children and adults and lasted about ten minutes. This was followed by an open-ended free discussion concerning the possible motivations, frustrations and methods of coping with social and personal problems initially suggested by the events in this film. No attempt was made to teach the right ‘right answers’, nor to inculcate adult ethical or moral precepts or values. Rather, every effort was made to encourage the children to think through these problems for themselves, rationally and logically; to discuss them with each other, criticize the picture and the ideas of their classmates, and finally to reach a tentative consensus which, however objectionable from the point of view of adult society, was their own. The procedure was referred to as a ‘Human Relations Class’. It was subsequently found that the use of a film was not essential to initiate discussion of this type. After the war the method was an important facet in a major research study by J. R. Seeley and others....⁵⁵⁹

It may be interesting to point out that Griffin makes no mention of the role of his fellow student, Bill Line, who also worked with him under the supervision of Blatz on the Regal Road School Project, in

⁵⁵⁸ Minutes, Meeting of the Forest Hill Village Project Staff and Liaison Officers, February 14, 1949, Center for Addiction and Mental Health Archives

⁵⁵⁹ Griffin, *In Search of Sanity*, 91.

the defining of the human relations class approach. Yet, in the meeting minutes from 1949 of the Forest Hill Village Project staff and liaison officers, it was Bill Line who emerges as the most active and articulate proponent of the psychoanalytic pedagogy that would come to characterize the human relations classes in the parlance of the upstarts, Seeley and Mallinson.

For example, according to the meeting minutes it was Bill Line who first responded to the concerns of the teachers in training, or liaison officers, about the complete lack of structure in the human relations classes. A Mr. Mahon, according to the minutes, “said he felt more comfortable now but did not seem to think this was the way he should feel since he was more comfortable only because his lessons now were more structured and he had been told he should not structure them”.⁵⁶⁰ Bill Line responded to this and other such complaints by the teachers conducting the classes, in a subtle, dialectical way:

Dr. Line felt that although the students now felt more at home with the teacher of the class, very little progress had been made, partly because there was confusion about the direction. He thought the classes would have to be given a good deal more form, which might mean the complete effacement of the teacher or might mean having an objective in mind. Giving more form to the classes did not mean structuring them as structure is usually thought of something that will happen, teacher-centered. He said there’s dynamite in what can be drawn from a class....⁵⁶¹

The greater form Line wanted to give to the classes, even over the objections of the teachers, was not to set learning goals as is traditional but the opposite, as he put it, to achieve “complete effacement of the teacher” or, as he said later in this same meeting, “to let the problem emerge through the students and the adult should not be in a position of having the right answers”. Seeley and Griffin, on the other hand, made gestures to appease the teacher’s anxieties about the lack of structure in the human relations classes. Griffin acknowledged that the “children were anxious because they don’t know where they are going or why”. He suggested that the classes begin with an expected level of structure as comparable with other classes, and then gradually let this structure fade into the background:

Dr. Griffin thought that Grade 11 should be given more information at the start because they were most accustomed to intellectualism. They had been exposed to discussions and felt that our classes suffered from comparison with other discussions. They had conveyed this attitude to their regular teachers. Dr. Griffin felt that it is best to introduce what you want to say and then move away from it. He thought that plunging in right at the start and exposing the students to a process that is so different

⁵⁶⁰ Minutes, Meeting of the Forest Hill Village Project Staff and Liaison Officers, February 14, 1949, Center for Addiction and Mental Health Archives

⁵⁶¹ Minutes, Meeting of the Forest Hill Village Project Staff and Liaison Officers, February 14, 1949, Center for Addiction and Mental Health Archives

from what they are accustomed to had made them uncomfortable and had made it much more difficult for the liaison officers in the long run.⁵⁶²

Dr. Line disagreed with even this level of structure suggesting that “growth takes place” when students discover for themselves what their own concerns are and in the process also realize that “no single answer to a problem is satisfactory and that there is more to this than they had thought; that living is more interesting and more complicated than they had thought”.⁵⁶³

Trying another angle on the structure issue, Seeley suggested that while judgements on matters of opinion or value should be reserved in the spirit of Dr. Line’s more adventurous perspective, perhaps the teachers could intervene in discussions on matters of fact to correct student errors. But to this Dr. Line, “insisted that the teachers should not go in as an authority”. As the meeting came to an end, the teachers were obviously not satisfied that their issue had been addressed:

Mr. Mathews said there were two opposing ideas here - are they going to supply answers or not?

“Dr.” Seeley brought the meeting to a close by using his authority as “Director” of the project to overrule the objections of Bill Line in order it would seem, to try to find some middle ground between structure and free discussion in the human relations classes:

Dr. Seeley then said he thought the result of the meeting was the decision not to supply answers and not to smuggle answers in. He said he would like to see premature answers avoided but if facts seem necessary to make an important point these facts should be supplied.

What is interesting about this meeting is that it was Bill Line who stands out as the leader of the discussion, and who articulates the most radically psychoanalytical perspective on the human relations classes in the interest of scientific experimentation. As he put it in the meeting, “we have an opportunity here to do something new”. This is of interest because Seeley and Mallinson later claimed that it was they themselves who took the human relations classes in a “new direction”. To those who thought more positively about Bill Line, such as his student Reva Gerstein, he did have the mind of an innovator, and it would have come as no surprise to her that it may in fact have been Line, not Seeley, who was the real force for innovation in theory of human relations classes. Unfortunately,

⁵⁶² Minutes, Meeting of the Forest Hill Village Project Staff and Liaison Officers, February 14, 1949, Center for Addiction and Mental Health Archives

⁵⁶³ Minutes, Meeting of the Forest Hill Village Project Staff and Liaison Officers, February 14, 1949, Center for Addiction and Mental Health Archives

as with other such men of genius, Line suffered all the more for it.⁵⁶⁴ For, as Seeley put it, Line was “probably out drinking somewhere”.

At the interpersonal level, it is interesting that Seeley seems to undercut Line in his summary of the results of the meeting. Though it might seem a minor instance of such undercutting by Seeley of his superiors, an escalating accumulation of such instances, was likely to have had a negative effect. We should remember here that as Seeley’s immediate superior at the Personnel Directorate of the Canadian Armed Forces, and the person who had promoted him to the highest levels of that organization, Seeley certainly owed some loyalty to Line for his mentorship. In this context, the appearance that Seeley was undermining his former boss in the meeting might have seemed ungrateful. Yet, as I learned during our interviews, the tension between Seeley and Line was longstanding.

At another level, it is interesting that Line would have such a willingness to consider the group psychotherapy model given his background as a protégé of Dr. Blatz. As we know, from Blatz’s perspective indirection was ineffective. Griffin, on the other hand, showed himself to be much less willing to let go of structure. He was therefore more of a true student of Blatz. Perhaps his propensity to fall off the wagon was the cause or consequence of Line’s interest in a more anarchical concept of freedom. Even Seeley was not willing to go as far as Line. Indeed, Line eventually fell out of favour in the hierarchy of the medical establishment. Blatz and Griffin, however, maintained their grip on power to the end of their careers.

In letters Seeley exchanged with Mallinson a few years later about the possibility of collaborating together to publish a book based on their work on the human relations classes at Forest Hill Collegiate, both Mallinson and Seeley showed that they were willing to join in a subtle lynching of Line. Seeley got them off to a good start:

I didn’t think for a moment that Bill would be of any help to us in giving us advice on publication. This is completely outside his realm technically and as far as responsibility goes.⁵⁶⁵

⁵⁶⁴ Interview with Reva Gerstein, 29 March 2010

⁵⁶⁵ Seeley to Mallinson, May 27th, 1954, Simon Fraser University Archives, Thomas J Mallinson Fonds, F124-1-0-0,1.

Notice the implication here that Seeley projects an image of himself as above his former superior in his knowledge of publication. Mallinson went along with Seeley's disrespect for Line though in a more muted form; perhaps out of a sense of caution that was unknown to the more risk prone Seeley:

In any event, what would you suggest re – getting the ball rolling – I don't want to work with Bill Line.⁵⁶⁶

Such undermining comments, all the more distasteful given Line's very important role in bringing along Seeley's career with the Army, were not unusual for him. We have already seen it in his disparaging remarks about the competence of such illuminaries as Clare Hincks or Bruno Bettelheim, not to mention members of his more immediate family. We shall see it again in regard to Stokes, Mallinson, and Sim. No one was beyond the reproachful eye of Seeley. Now, this may not be unusual in the corporate world and Seeley may just have been doing what they all did as a matter of survival. On the other hand, Seeley's continued failure to achieve a lasting position in any corporate club that would have him as a member might suggest that he took such stratagems to an extreme that others managed to avoid.

iii) Colonel Edmund Bullis

Given Seeley's determination to make a name for himself, it would not have been enough to merely block any potential credit going to Line or Griffin for the human relations classes; he would also have to successfully undermine the claims of Thomas Mallinson, his statistician. At first this would not have been a problem for Seeley given that Mallinson's junior position on the project rendered him useful as a lackey who would do the actual work of compiling the research data needed to prove the effectiveness of the human relation class technique. As time went on, however, it would seem that as in Hegel's story of the Lord and Bondsman, Mallinson's own powers and freedom were revealed to him in the form of his servitude. As we have already mentioned, he turned the work he did on the human relations classes into a successful Ph. D. thesis with Stokes and Line on his committee. So successful in fact, that Stokes extolled the thesis as showing that the technique did in fact benefit the mental health of the students in Forest Hill and therefore constituted a breakthrough in the field of education. In a letter of congratulations to Mallinson on the completion of his thesis, Stokes wrote:

⁵⁶⁶ Mallinson to Seeley, June 21st, 1954 Simon Fraser University Archives, Thomas J Mallinson Fonds, F124-1-0-0,1.

Your thesis was, in my opinion, excellent. It stands, in exemplary status, as something proven. That exemplary status should not be relinquished in favour of a more popular appeal of the ‘good idea’ variety.⁵⁶⁷

Perhaps just to rub it in, Stokes also acclaimed Mallinson’s work in a letter to Seeley in the context of his increasingly impatient coaxing for the completion of *Crestwood Heights*:

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your note: it is good to know that the publication is coming along. I think you might send one chapter at a time back to Miss Czeija for typing, receiving it again for cross reference purposes: that would give you, at any time now, five sixths of the total for referral while allowing the typing to proceed.

Tom Mallinson’s thesis came up for examination Monday: he was successful and the general opinion was that it was first class work....⁵⁶⁸

While Seeley dithered, Mallinson was getting results, something administrators always appreciate. In this situation it was of course necessary for Seeley to cast doubt on Mallinson’s claims to being the inventor of this new form of psychotherapeutic pedagogy. He sought to do this by laying claim to Mallinson’s work as his own. The appropriation of other people’s work would become a pattern as Seeley’s own career as a pop sociologist began to take shape with the publication of *Crestwood Heights* in 1956. The occasion for his intervention in Mallinson’s thesis was the proposal to use it as the basis for a publication on the discovery of a psychotherapeutic pedagogy whose effectiveness had been empirically verified in the work of the Forest Hill Village Project. Why Mallinson agreed to the attempt by Seeley to co-opt his work is hard to guess. It may have been that Mallinson, being an adept bureaucratic operator in his own right, had a similar hope that he could hoist the actual work of publication onto Seeley. Or, if we take things at face value, perhaps Mallinson felt that Seeley’s contribution to the development of the human relations class as a pedagogical tool actually deserved recognition.

The reality is that the two men had already begun work on such a publication by 1951 when they co-authored a paper presented to the American Psychiatric Association entitled, “A Controlled Experiment in Group-Directed Discussion with Children (An Aspect of a Community Research Study)”. The introductory part of the paper was clearly written by Seeley. It demonstrated what Murray Ross, his personal friend and boss, referred to as Seeley’s “catholic knowledge” of the social

⁵⁶⁷ Stokes to Mallinson, May 9th, 1955, Simon Fraser University Archives, Thomas J Mallinson Fonds, F124-1-0-0,1.

⁵⁶⁸ Stokes to Seeley, November 5th, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

sciences. Seeley describes the roots of the human relations class methodology as traversing the psychoanalytic theory of Bettelheim, the sociological theory of Riesman, the educational theory of John Dewey and the political theory of Adorno. However, the more humble origins of the practice in the work of a mental hygienist from Delaware, retired American Colonel Edmund Bullis, were left to the more empirical part of the paper, presumably written by Thomas Mallinson:

These sessions came to be called ‘Human Relations Classes’ although this is obviously unjust to Col. Edmund Bullis earlier use of and prior claim to the term.⁵⁶⁹

As Mallinson would later point out in his thesis, Bullis’s method was much more directive than that which finally emerged from the Forest Hill Village Project. It was much more analogous to the process used by Griffin and Blatz during the Regal Road School Project. According to Bullis, the Human Relations Class should begin with the reading of a story or a play that involves an emotionally charged situation where mental health issues are at stake. The teacher of such human relations classes, according to Bullis, would then direct the discussion toward an exploration of the issues raised, and whether the students in the class had ever experienced such issues themselves in their own lives as family members, or in their peer group at school.

It makes sense that, given the prominence of Bullis in the American mental hygiene movement and his acquaintance therefore with Canadian leaders in the field like Clare Hincks and Jack Griffin, there was a cross-fertilization of language and theory between the American and Canadian wings of the mental hygiene movement. One might even speculate that Griffin and Line’s ideas about human relations classes as implemented by them during the Regal Road Schools Project of the 1930s might have found their way into Bullis’ work, first published during the 1940s, and then boomeranged back to Canada when Seeley and Mallinson took up the idea again during the Forest Hill Village Project of the 1950s. It is also interesting to note, in this context, that just as was the case with Line, Griffin and Seeley, Bullis was a military man who was also inspired by his wartime experience to devise methods that might be preventive of mental health issues. As has already been identified, the question is whether the military origins of these preventive mental health techniques suggested a concern for ensuring social conformity. More to the point, how could free discussion serve such military interests? At first sight, it would seem to be antithetical to military virtues like discipline and obedience. From the perspective of Foucault, however, free discussion classes could easily fall along

⁵⁶⁹ Seeley and Mallinson, “A Controlled Experiment in Group-Directed Discussion with Children (An Aspect of a Community Research Study)” Archives of Ontario, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, 1948-1973, RG10-22, File 115.

the continuum from the medieval confession to modern psychoanalytic session of investigative procedures designed to expose and control the population. As Seeley put it, such free discussion brings everything out into the “cold, white light of detachment”.

No matter what the line of development might have been between the work of Bullis and that of Seeley and Mallinson, the two colleagues were intent upon minimizing its impact by distancing themselves from such possible connections when they came to preparations for publication of Mallinson’s thesis. As Mallinson wrote to Seeley in the spring of 1954:

I am ambivalent about giving these classes another name – any term immediately captivates, hence ‘freezes’ the process being described. I would like your suggestions as to a term, or phrase, which should, I think, be used for the final report. We must not permit it to be lumped with Bullis’ work.⁵⁷⁰

At this point Mallinson had not yet finished his thesis, and so it is clear that he felt that despite it being his thesis, Seeley did have a role in it. Seeley himself pointed this out, in a sure sign of jealousy at the progress of Mallinson’s thesis, when he wrote back in May:

The news about Line and your thesis is most wonderful. I talked to Stokes today and apparently he is riding high on it too.

I didn’t think for a moment that Bill would be of any help to us in giving us advice on publication....What I really had in mind was that he ought to know that there will be a book presumably written by our two selves on what is ostensibly your sole thesis....⁵⁷¹

In another letter, written a year later in July of 1955, even after Mallinson’s thesis was finished, Seeley was still calling the authorship of the human relations class method into question:

I am not really decided in my own mind what are the respective claims of our two selves with regard to the proposed authorship of the Human Relations class study. I suppose we can put off discussing this until we have the finished document but I did want you to know that it was an unsettled question in my mind.⁵⁷²

⁵⁷⁰ Mallinson to Seeley, April 12, 1954, Simon Fraser University Archives, Thomas J Mallinson Fonds, , F124-1-0-0,1.

⁵⁷¹ Seeley to Mallinson, May 27th, 1954, Simon Fraser University Archives, Thomas J Mallinson Fonds, , F124-1-0-0,1.

⁵⁷² Seeley to Mallinson, July 1st, 1955 Simon Fraser University Archives, Thomas J Mallinson Fonds, F124-1-0-0,1.

The question is to what extent did Seeley actually have a claim to authorship of what Mallinson in fact put into writing? When it came to pursuing an alternative name for the sessions, Mallinson certainly showed a more impressive mastery of the issues. For his part, Seeley really did not give the question much thought:

I don't know what to suggest as a term since, as you say, any term will have the unfortunate effect of 'freezing' the concept. Do you have any objection to the term which we have already used, "Group directed Discussions with Children"? If you do, how about "Free" Discussions with Children? ⁵⁷³

Mallinson, on the other hand, had already moved well beyond thinking of the human relations class method solely in terms of Bullis and the mental hygiene movement. Through his research into the broader historical developments in the field of group psychoanalysis and group psychotherapy, Mallinson had already identified the human relations classes as falling within the ambit of a kind of group psychotherapy. He invented the term "Heuristic Classes in Human Relations", as we see in the following excerpt from the draft of his thesis, which he had sent to Seeley hoping for assent, but which was seemingly overlooked:

The term 'Human Relations Classes' which we used to describe these sessions has been employed to cover many types of class activities, with priority probably going to Col. Edmund Bullis. However, we cannot underline too strongly the felt difference between the experience we were prepared to 'offer' and the obvious guidance employed by Bullis and others; while we strove to provide the opportunity for 'human relating' in the belief that whatever values and learning there might be would accrue from the experience itself, others have sought to utilize the occasion for introducing specific 'rules' (social and moral) on 'how to relate'. Perhaps it would be better if such a term as "Heuristic Classes in Human Relations" were used to catch the sharp distinction between these two kinds of relationships that Buber seems to be making when he speaks of "dialogic relationships" in contrast to those purposive relationships usually obtaining in social interaction. ⁵⁷⁴

vi) Group Psychotherapy in the Classroom

In a handwritten note written on the copy of the footnote from the thesis, Mallinson goes on to set the idea of heuristic classes more explicitly in the context of group psychotherapy:

⁵⁷³ Seeley to Mallinson April 27th, 1954, Simon Fraser University Archives, Thomas J Mallinson Fonds, F124-1-0-0,1.

⁵⁷⁴ Seeley to Mallinson April 27th, 1954 Simon Fraser University Archives, Thomas J Mallinson Fonds, F124-1-0-0,1.

Jack,

this term has been used by ‘Perry’ in Mawer’s new book on *Psychotherapy – Research and Practise*. He speaks of ‘Heuristic sets’ with the patient in later sessions of therapy.

Tom⁵⁷⁵

Regrettably, in the final version of his thesis, Mallinson sticks with the “Human Relations Class” terminology, though he does set the Forest Hill Village Project method squarely within the history of psychiatric psychotherapy. He traces it back to a contemporary of Freud’s in Vienna, Dr. J. L. Moreno, who sought to diverge from Freud’s teaching, like all the other disciples:

...it was left to Dr. J. L. Moreno working with children in Vienna, to lay the foundations for what later developed as group psychotherapy.⁵⁷⁶

Moreover, in his thesis, Mallinson clearly sets the classroom technique in the more non-directive camp, likely associated with the psychoanalytic orientation in the group psychotherapy tradition:

While there are several techniques, the ‘backbone of the group method is the discussion technique’... In the application of this technique to the group situation, we find that the framework of discussion falls somewhere along a continuum ranging from the ‘repressive-inspirational’ approach to the ‘analytical’ or ‘self-directive’ approach. The ‘repressive-inspirational’ approach is best represented by Alcoholics Anonymous and all those groups which lay the main stress on the emotional support derived from group morale. Some of these groups include didactic talks and lectures by the leader as basis for discussion. The self directive, or non-directive approach tries to foster face to face interaction in an atmosphere conducive to free and honest expressions of feeling....While one hesitates to pin on labels, the approach used in this particular research is oriented strongly toward the self-directive end of the continuum.⁵⁷⁷

What Mallinson also correctly claims, albeit obliquely, is that his study takes the relatively unexplored step of applying the group psychotherapy technique in a high school setting:

...while earlier uses of social situations centered around the education of the young, we find that contemporary application of the phenomena has been largely in the field of adult education....⁵⁷⁸

⁵⁷⁵ Seeley to Mallinson, April 27th, 1954 Simon Fraser University Archives, Thomas J Mallinson Fonds, F124-1-0-0,1.

⁵⁷⁶ Thomas Mallinson, *An Experimental Investigation of Group-Directed Discussion in the Classroom*, Ph.d. Thesis, 1955, Department of Psychology, University of Toronto Archives, 39.

⁵⁷⁷ Thomas Mallinson, *An Experimental Investigation of Group-Directed Discussion in the Classroom*, Ph.d. Thesis, 1955, Department of Psychology, University of Toronto Archives, 43.

⁵⁷⁸ Thomas Mallinson, *An Experimental Investigation of Group-Directed Discussion in the Classroom*, Ph.d. Thesis, 1955, Department of Psychology, University of Toronto Archives, 41.

However, what may also be interesting to highlight at this point in the development of the story, is the role that Mallinson did not play in the articulation of the psychodynamic nature of the human relations classes. Certainly there is much evidence in Seeley's talks during the Project on various occasions, and in the chapters he wrote for *Crestwood Heights*, that he was very agile in giving psychoanalytical sounding descriptions of the Human Relations Class method. In its technical preoccupation with the efficacy of the group discussion experiment, Mallinson's thesis does not offer the kinds of psychoanalytical allusions that are frequently made by Seeley. For example, in his part of the paper the two men presented to the APA, Seeley writes things like:

The general view of mental illness as a "breakdown in living" permitted us to view pathology as a continuum between psychosis and the "psychopathology of everyday life".

In the same article Seeley writes:

Clinical insight provided also suggestions as to the critical necessity to begin with the patient's problem rather than with the therapists.

Or, as Seeley reported in his Interim Report on the Forest Hill Village Project, as only a patient or therapist himself could do:

We have taken the clue that you cannot tell people things until they are ready to hear them, and, knowing when people are ready to hear this or that about themselves or the world they live in, is a matter for which one has to develop specialized sensitivities and skills.

Though Mallinson did not have this kind of insight into the clinical psychoanalytic process, he did at least take the time to do the research to show how these classes fit into the overall history of efforts to transfer psychoanalytical processes to a group setting. Perhaps Seeley was ungrateful to try to rain on Mallinson's parade at the time of the publication of his Ph. D. thesis, but was his reaction merely a matter of political infighting, or did he have a reason to be resentful

vii) Getting Along With Others

As has been suggested time and again, Seeley's theoretical architectonics were most impressive, he just did not do the research work he needed to do to support his structures. This supports Seeley's claim that he was the inspiration behind transforming the Human Relations Class structure into a form of non-directive talk therapy. In addition, the fact of Seeley's lifelong personal interest in

psychoanalysis, from the time of his involvement with Dr. Martin Fischer, to the point where he ended his career in private practice as a psychoanalyst, also provides strong circumstantial evidence that he was behind the psychoanalytic turn taken in the work of the Forest Hill Village Project. Indeed, the Project itself, as the brainchild of Seeley, is a massive piece of circumstantial evidence for the formative influence his thought must have had on the human relations class method. In the final analysis, however, the case for Seeley being the sole intellectual father figure of psychodynamic pedagogy in Ontario's history is not entirely clear. Just as the history of psychoanalysis in Europe shows that Freud himself did not work in a vacuum; that his role in the overall development of psychoanalysis, though important, was not absolute; so Seeley's role in the development of Human Relations Class pedagogy was part of a larger process involving many people before and after him. From this perspective Seeley did not really have a right to claim sole authorship and deny others, like Mallinson and Line, their rightful place in the development of the ideas and practices that were at work in the Forest Hill Village Project.

A good example of someone who may have had a very important influence in the psychodynamic shape of the Forest Hill Village Project pedagogy, but whose presence is somewhat in the background at the upper echelons of the federal beauraucracy where the project got off the ground, was Brock Chisolm. He was one of the few pro-psychoanalytic voices in the Ontario establishment, who just also happened to be Deputy Minister of Health in the Federal Government at the time. While there is no physical evidence of Chisolm's direct influence on the specific programs of the Forest Hill Village Project, it might be possible, however, if we follow the line of command, to trace the influence of the psychoanalytic orientation of Bill Line, which seems to have been quite an important ingredient in the original thinking of Seeley and the CMHA staff about the Human Relations Class technique, back to the influence of Chisolm as his superior, and the man who appointed him as Head of the Directorate of Personnel Selection in Army during the War. Perhaps Chisolm's voice was at the table with Seeley in the early stages of the Forest Hill Village Project through the person of Bill Line.

Having said all that, and recognizing that Seeley's was not the sole or final voice in regard to the role of the human relations class in the Forest Hill Village Project; it is at the same time important to further demonstrate that his role, though not absolute, was very important. In an off-the-cuff lecture given early on in the Project, which somehow found its way to being a typed up manuscript, on the topic of, "Getting Along With Others", he gave a most brilliant account of the significance of the human relations classes. What made this piece particularly effective as an example of Seeley's writing was that in it Seeley did not make the attempt to come down from the level of theory into the

empirical debate over whether the human relations classes had been shown to improve mental health or academic progress according to scientifically verifiable statistical analysis. This was Mallinson's achievement in his thesis, where he marshals the statistical data comparing control group classes with the experimental classes' *ad nauseum* to prove the point:

Hypothesis 3.3 - that the experimental group would show differential gain in the direction regarded by mental hygienists as 'healthy' - seems amply supported by the data of the California Personality Test, no matter how analyzed, for both grades....The results secured would have a probability of occurring, on the basis of sampling fluctuations, less than once in twenty for the Teachers Ratings and less than once in fifty trials for the Inventory, with the meager data from grade 6 pointing in the same direction.⁵⁷⁹

Mallinson states his thesis in policy terms at the very end of the document:

The results suggest: first, that speculation in the theoretical sciences of psychology and sociology is compatible with experience in the practical arts of education and psychiatry; second, that this funded knowledge makes practicable the theoretical specification of a teaching method designed to improve personality integration in students, thus making for immediate value and perhaps even decreased danger of later psychiatric or social morbidity; third, that when such a teaching method was periodically applied to two groups of students, the gains in personal and social relationships of these students, in comparison with control groups, adequately justified the expectations as to the effectiveness of the method.⁵⁸⁰

In any event, this type of jargon-laden and statistically oriented argument, as is typical of research in the field of scientific psychology, was designed to prove that the human relations classes actually worked as therapy. This style became the focus of the published articles and news reports about the Forest Hill Village Project by Mallinson and Seeley such as the already mentioned paper presented to the American Psychiatric Association. Yet, the medical issue of whether psychotherapy prevents or cures when applied in an educational setting, was not of concern to Seeley in, "Getting Along With Others". Rather, Seeley stays at the more theoretical level with his focus on the content of the discussions in the human relations classes held in Forest Hill. Seeley was at his best talking about the cultural implications of what was revealed in the concerns of the children of Forest Hill in the 1950s. Specifically, Seeley applies Riesman's insights in *The Lonely Crowd* about the other-directed orientation of post-war culture to draw out the significance of the children's preoccupation with popularity. Here is the point in the lecture where he explains the depth of the children's concern with popularity as akin to a religious belief:

⁵⁷⁹ Thomas Mallinson, *An Experimental Investigation of Group-Directed Discussion in the Classroom*, Ph.d. Thesis, 1955, Department of Psychology, University of Toronto Archives, 125.

⁵⁸⁰ Thomas Mallinson, *An Experimental Investigation of Group-Directed Discussion in the Classroom*, Ph.d. Thesis, 1955, Department of Psychology, University of Toronto Archives, 148.

...a particular form of their discussion I think shed light on this 'getting along with others' orientation which has become the dominant if not the only serious religion of our age. In the first place, as I have established, they not only thought that there was no more important topic that they could discuss than the problem of popularity...they felt so strongly about it that in the absence of other knowledge they thought that this must be a world-wide, a necessary characteristic of human nature....

The second fact that speedily became clear from the discussion was that there was no limit to the amount of popularity that was desired....It was like one of those bottomless anxieties – the more popularity you had, the more you felt you required and not only the popularity and approval of your peers but if possible you wanted the popularity, if that is the term, with reference to your parents, to your teachers and most particularly to that vague 'they' that somehow floats around outside the circle of immediately known people.

...the children discovered...they would need to be roughly speaking millionaires, saints, savants, beauties and so on all rolled into one if they were to achieve this *sine qua non* of a happy life....”⁵⁸¹

In other words, according to Seeley's logic, the children of Forest Hill were growing up in a culture of high expectations that doomed them to frustration and unhappiness because, obviously, life just isn't like that. But the important connections here between the social religion of getting along with others, the children's concern with popularity, their high achievement orientation, and Riesman's concept of the other-directed character type as that which is dominant in our society, are not fully brought together till later in the lecture. This can be seen most explicitly in the following excerpt:

It is no longer possible to raise a child if you want him to get along with others by instructing him in certain fairly model norms which he can then take it will be sufficient to guide him through his life. As a matter of fact you find more and more parents, as Riesman has pointed out, trying to avoid this whole area of instructing their child morally, in effect telling them, by a variety of subtleties, that the big thing is to do your best, no matter what you do, do your best....

The child however, who has no direction except to do his best, who has to find out from moment to moment and in every particular situation from those immediately present and around him, what doing your best is for that given moment. Does it mean being saucy to the teacher or does it mean getting along and managing? That depends on where you are and what the teacher is like and what the definition is at the moment, and the only way you can find this out is by a process of constant listening to your peer group which permits you to pick up certain minimal clues which will tell you how to orient yourself. This kind of orientation which Riesman calls 'other direction', bears an analogical relationship to the gyroscope that I was talking about a minute ago in terms of a person with a kind of constant radar screen moving in all directions, trying to pick up the faint impulses mediated to him from his peer group as to what he should do at any given moment. Now this is the kind of society in which getting along with others is maximized and is in fact made a way of life.⁵⁸²

⁵⁸¹ John R Seeley, "Getting Along With Others", February 7, 1952, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁵⁸² John R Seeley, "Getting Along With Others", February 7, 1952, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

This thought-provoking utilization of the material drawn from the human relations classes for the purpose of ethnographical understanding of Forest Hill Village does not make its way into the pages of *Crestwood Heights*. He does return to the theme of Riesman's notion of other-directedness in connection to the human relations classes in another early lecture which he presented as an "Interim Report" on the progress of the Forest Hill Village Project. He speaks of the issue of autonomy, as does Riesman, in a society so bent on enforcing behavioural conformity through norms of social discourse like the importance of popularity:

We have been concerned about the peculiar distressing situation of the middle class child in particular, who, in our society, seems to be at the focus of all the manipulative, other-directed facilities of the society, and which poses for that child, a peculiarly difficult problem of obtaining any kind of autonomy, any kind of ability to think and feel himself, or for himself.

Out of these concerns, we of the Uppertown experiment, set out to devise, if we could, a social activity, in which on an egalitarian basis, and not on the usual 'teacher up here and children down there' basis, in an atmosphere that was warm and value judgment free, the children could carry on for themselves, routinely, an investigation that would help them understand themselves....⁵⁸³

When it came to the writing of *Crestwood Heights*, Seeley seems to have lost sight of his original aim of making the human relations classes central to the Project not only in terms of their therapeutic value, but also in terms of their value in providing important content for the purposes of cultural and sociological analyses. Perhaps Seeley decided that the early analysis he offers in his lecture on "Getting Along with Others" was too obvious, or too theoretical to be worthy of inclusion. This omission may have been an example of a pervasive self-destructiveness on the part of Seeley. He either did not finish his work, or he did not put it forward assertively. He seemed to prefer to struggle rather than to take what was there for him. This was where I suspect his underlying anger often got the better of him. That he seemed aware of this tragic flaw was expressed in the very last line of "Getting Along With Others" in which he reflected most presciently on the possibility of autonomy in our other-directed culture, as if he were talking to himself:

How can you create a kind of situation in which some enterprise which you care about as an enterprise will determine of itself the kinds of relations which are desirable, whether they consist of getting along with one another or fighting one another and fighting has its values too.⁵⁸⁴

⁵⁸³ John R. Seeley, "Interim Report on the Uppertown Experiment", January, 13, 1953, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California.

⁵⁸⁴ John R Seeley, "Getting Along With Others", February 7, 1952, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

Though Seeley may have been heading in an intriguing direction in these early lectures, he did not follow through. Nowhere in *Crestwood Heights* does Seeley return to or develop on this theme of the cultural implications of the content of what the children of Forest Hill said in free discussions with Forest Hill Village Project staff. Instead, the culmination of the work on the human relations class technique turns out to be Mallinson's Ph. D. thesis. Neither Mallinson, nor Seeley ever managed to transform their Human Relations Class research into a publication that might have brought recognition and the potential for further progress to the issue of psychotherapy in schools. Rather, the two men went their separate ways.

viii) Seeley's First Rejection Letter

When the Forest Hill Village Project funding came to an end in 1953, Seeley left the Department of Psychiatry and resumed his wandering. It was Mallinson, in fact, who took on the role of "Senior Sociologist" left behind by Seeley with the Department of Psychiatry. Mallinson remained with the Department of Psychiatry for over ten years in this role before taking up a position with Simon Fraser University in British Columbia for the balance of his career. While still with the Department of Psychiatry, Mallinson did continue to work in the field of group psychotherapy, but mainly in hospital settings, not in schools.

This parting of the ways between the two men might be explained from a number of different perspectives and not all of them can be reduced to a suspicion that this was another example of the inevitable outcome of Seeley's tendency to prefer to fight rather than to get along with others. We have already pointed out the signs of jealousy on Seeley's part about the success of Mallinson's thesis. It is certainly noteworthy that one interpretation of events might be that the malice was more on Mallinson's part as he managed to maneuver himself into a favoured position with Aldwyn Stokes and usurp the role once occupied by Seeley.

There is an intriguing letter written by Stokes to Seeley found amongst the "Fischer Papers" which may shed some light on how Mallinson got into Stokes' good books and how Seeley fell out of favor. The letter attempts to explain, in quite intellectual terms, why an application by Seeley for a fulltime return to the Department of Psychiatry was rejected:

You will recall that I promised to let you know by the end of October what the prospects were of changing or modifying your work opportunities in Toronto....Since our dining together I have spoken with Murray Ross and Jean MacFarlane and in a general way with other colleagues. It is clear that, at the moment, there is no possibility of providing a full time University Post....

Perhaps in recent years you have moved into logical analysis at the expense of scientific empiricism. You may be right to do so, but I would argue otherwise. Logical analysis implies self-contained systems, symbolic abstractions and a contained harmony; scientific empiricism implies phenomenal realities, open systems and an acceptance of discordant fluctuating variables. Symbolic logic cannot be well communicated to the scientific empiricist who knows, 'in his bones' that reality is an infinite matrix. Opposite positions are bound to arise with conflict unless a mind position is maintained, with excursions, where appropriate, into logic on the one hand and experimentations on the other.

Your tremendous abilities lie in the mind position but, I think at the moment you are using one arm only in your fight for truth (which in this human vale of tears can only be relative).

Whether or not I have expressed myself well or confusedly, you well know what I am trying to say....⁵⁸⁵

Even if there may have been unspoken interpersonal tensions between Stokes, Seeley and Mallinson; too subtle for the historian to bear adequate witness to, it is quite clear from this letter that a dispute had emerged with Stokes in regard to Seeley's performance. Stokes' concern was with the lack of empirical foundation in Seeley's work. This, in turn, hints at what he found more appealing about the work of Mallinson. In effect, Stokes is saying in the letter, much as we ourselves have observed, that Seeley's work lacked a research or content basis. This means that Stokes did not think Seeley was working hard enough, or at least not working hard enough in a productive way. In addition to the evident disapproval on Stokes' part of the work of Seeley, this letter also basically tells Seeley that there is not nor, it is implied, will there ever be, employment for Seeley again with the Department of Psychiatry. These implications of the letter are particularly striking in light of the fact that, though undated, it was written after the publication of *Crestwood Heights*. We know that the letter came after *Crestwood Heights* because it suggests that if Seeley wanted to stay in Toronto he would have to remain in his job at the Alcohol Research Foundation:

....as far as Toronto goes, your present position with the Alcoholic Research Foundation would represent the basic work situation.

Seeley worked at the Alcoholic Research Foundation from 1957 to 1960 after he returned from a brief exile to the United States to work on a Community Survey in Indianapolis, Indiana. Obviously, Stokes was not all that impressed with either Seeley's work as Director of the Forest Hill Village Project, or with his theoretical contribution in *Crestwood Heights*. Something had gone wrong in his relations with Stokes. At one time he was Stokes' golden boy, which is only hinted at superficially in the intellectualized criticism of Seeley in the rejection letter. We will see much more about the underlying interpersonal dynamics between Stokes and Seeley when we trace the events around the

⁵⁸⁵ Stokes to Seeley, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill Ontario

writing of *Crestwood Heights* in the next chapter. At this point, however, we can guess at one aspect of these underlying interpersonal conflicts, the Seeley – Mallinson relationship. We have already seen that Seeley was jealous of Mallinson's success in the completion of his Ph. D., something Seeley never managed to achieve. We have also seen how Stokes was very impressed by Mallinson's thesis, probably because of its empiricist orientation in contrast to Seeley's vacuous symbolic logic. What is left to enumerate more specifically is the process by which Stokes managed to replace Seeley with Mallinson within the Department of Psychiatry. Perhaps, it wasn't just the fact that Seeley disappointed Stokes that led to his ouster from the Department. It is also true that Stokes had really come to admire Mallinson, who fit in better in the field of medical research. Perhaps, at first, Stokes like so many others was impressed by Seeley's intellectual versatility. Seeley seemed to be as at home in the realms of statistics and mathematics as he was in theology and sociology. When it came down to it, however, this was either for show, or for its own sake, but not for the sake of serious academic research. Seeley, like an aristocrat's son, was not interested in getting his hands dirty in the field. But Mallinson was, and, even if he may have liked to play the aristocrat himself, perhaps Stokes couldn't shake off his own inclination to admire hard work and practicality, deeply rooted in his more humble Welsh origins. Mallinson was a worker like Stokes. He got things done. He finished his thesis. He was deferential as we can see from the very beginning of his relationship with Stokes. When Mallinson received a kind note of consideration in 1953 from Stokes regarding the ending of financial support for the Forest Hill Village Project, Mallinson handwrote the following note of thanks:

Dr. Stokes,
Thank you. I might have anticipated such an act of understanding on your part. I shall take advantage of your offer to discuss this matter sometime this spring. Tom Mallinson.⁵⁸⁶

As a reward for his loyalty, and for the promise of his Ph. D. research, remembering that Stokes was on his Committee along with Bill Line, Mallinson was promoted in 1953 to the position of full time "Social Group Worker" with the Department of Psychiatry. At this very time, with the Forest Hill Village Project funding all dried up, Seeley left the Department of Psychiatry to take up a research director post for another project in Indiannapolis, Indiana. Unfortunately, there is no paper trail explaining whether or not he was even offered a post to continue working with the Department of Psychiatry. Nonetheless, he certainly remained in contact with Stokes and Mallinson and other

⁵⁸⁶ Mallinson to Stokes, December 11, 1953 Simon Fraser University Archives, Thomas J Mallinson Fonds, F124-1-0-0,1.

members of the Forest Hill Village Project Staff as he continued to work on the writing of *Crestwood Heights* while in Indiana.

What may clarify the reality that, in fact, Malinson was chosen over Seeley for a job with the Department of Psychiatry, is that at the very same time that Stokes was writing to Seeley saying there was no room for him at the Department of Psychiatry, he was making room for Mallinson to have just such a full-time post. In 1956 -1957, the year Seeley returned to Toronto to take up a post as research director at the Alcoholic Research Foundation, Mallinson was appointed "Senior Sociologist", formerly Seeley's title, with the Department of Psychiatry. The language of Stokes' letters in regard to Mallinson's standing in the Department of Psychiatry from this time period have a very different tone to that used in the letter of rejection he wrote to Seeley. For example, Stokes wrote the following letter to the Head of the U of T Department of Psychology about Mallinson in 1957:

Today I have had a discussion with Dr. T. J. Mallinson regarding his future in the Department of Psychiatry. We consider him a very valuable man and one that we hope will be able to develop an interest in Groups. In think once he has made up his mind he could be given a place in the establishment here....⁵⁸⁷

In 1958, Stokes further wrote the Bursar at the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital that:

As you know Dr. Mallinson has been with us continuously for about ten years....I am anxious to maintain Dr. Mallinson's services....⁵⁸⁸

Obviously, Stokes had very different intentions for Dr. Mallinson than he did in regard to "Mr." Seeley. Was this shift in favor of Mallinson merely a question of intellectual differences between Stokes and Seeley? We are reminded here of Seeley's inner life and his feelings, revealed to Fischer, that Stokes was a threatening father figure in Seeley's mind. Fischer's notes record Seeley as saying "Stokes father, I boy". More pointedly he said:

Stokes ambiguity is threatening
Ought to know clearly what he thinks
Danger comes from misunderstanding
Than from opposition

⁵⁸⁷ Stokes to Dr. Roger Myers, Head, Department of Psychology, April 10, 1957, University of Toronto Archives, Department of Psychiatry Fonds, 1947-1968, A 1986-0032, Box 2-2202-03.

⁵⁸⁸ Stokes to Mr. Thomson, Bursar, Toronto Psychiatric Hospital, September 11, 1958, University of Toronto Archives, Department of Psychiatry Fonds, 1947-1968, A 1986-0032, Box 2-2202-03.

Was Seeley being oppositional with Stokes as might be indicated in the above passages? Fischer's notes reveal that Seeley subjectively felt that he expected Stokes to have a built-up anger towards him. At the time he arrived back in Toronto to take up his position with the Alcoholic Research Foundation, he naturally ran into Stokes:

I dreaded coming back to Canada in August. But I talked to Don Graham Monday night – and everything seemed most cordial – and then Stokes just a few minutes ago – and he invited me to stay with them if I came up for a conference about the book in June. So where are my ghosts? I anticipated that neither would willingly speak to me – and felt accordingly.⁵⁸⁹

What had Seeley done that he thought had offended Stokes? Moreover, perhaps Seeley should not have been fooled by the superficial cordiality shown by Stokes and Graham at that time. Indeed, perhaps Seeley was well aware that Stokes' actions in promoting Mallinson, and rejecting him from the Department of Psychiatry spoke louder than words. In a letter to Fischer sent in the mid-sixties from Brandeis University, where he would later work for brief period, Seeley reported with glee the news he had heard of Stokes' downfall:

Saw Coates and Greenland the other day (here). I gather Stokes has been pretty well by-passed in the Clark Institute.

Love!
Jack⁵⁹⁰

x) Mental Health in Ontario Schools

In the final analysis, the failure to carry forward their promising work as part of the Forest Hill Village Project on the integration of psychotherapeutic techniques into classroom teaching can be traced back, at least in part, to the troublesome interpersonal triangle of relationships between Stokes, Seeley and Mallinson. This would certainly be the case in regard to the failure to publish a pop sociology about psychotherapy in the classroom that might have sparked public debate on the subject and further study. However, other historical factors must also have been in play, not the least of which would likely have been the general intellectual disrepute into which psychoanalysis fell in the later 1960s and thereafter. Further, there were certain institutional factors involved such as the failure of teacher's colleges across Canada to lend academic legitimacy to the training program in mental health education that had been set up for the liaison officers during the Forest Hill Village Project. In

⁵⁸⁹ Fischer's Notes, Undated, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

⁵⁹⁰ Seeley to Fischer, February 26th, 1966, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

addition, there was the failure of the schools themselves to open themselves up to mental health oriented approaches to teaching.

According to the follow-up study done by Queen's Psychology Professor Isabel Laird regarding the effectiveness of the training offered to teachers during the Forest Hill Village Project, the lack of academic credibility was problematic. Indeed, she suggested, it was difficult to even find the right kind of term or title by which to refer to the role for which these teachers were being trained:

For convenience the teachers concerned are referred to in this report as L. O's – standing for Liaison Officer. This title was used during the Forest Hill Village Project in Toronto to indicate the fact that the teacher was being trained to relate or "liaise" between other teachers, administrators, mental health services and clinics, physicians, nurses and social agencies and perhaps parents. They were not to be considered as social workers or psychologists, but as teachers with special interests and skills in the mental health field. Upon returning to their school settings they were never referred to as L.O.'s, but usually as "Mental Health Coordinators", or "Mental Health Teacher Consultant's".... The popular first term, liaison officer, gives no indication at all of the work, or qualifications, or field of work. Mental Health Liaison Officer, as a term, is too long, and in fact too wide, implying as it would that the L.O. coordinates all the mental health work of an area. I have no solution to offer; but unless and until the L.O.'s carry a recognized diploma or certificate at a post-graduate level, accepted by the teaching profession as a 'promotion unit' of some sort, it will be hard to invent a title acceptable to all provinces.⁵⁹¹

Yet, strangely, Laird did not go on to recommend such accreditation:

It is not of course necessary to have a single title; and it is doubtful if it is wise to attempt a credit basis for the training envisaged by the founders of the L.O.'s course.

Why not, the reader wonders? The interdisciplinary program in psychology, sociology and pedagogy that Seeley intended to offer the L.O's was certainly intellectually-demanding enough in theory. The reality of the program, however, as was so often the case with the grand plans of John R. Seeley, did not live up to its billing. Laird pointed this out in her recommendations on the future of the program initiated by Seeley:

The course itself could be improved by better organization and planning. The advantages of being presented with quite different points of view and frames of reference should be balanced by better

⁵⁹¹ Isabel Laird, "“Mental Health in Education”: An Evaluation of the Results of a Special Mental Health Training Program for Selected Teachers”, January, 1955 Ontario Archives, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, RG 10-22, File 138, Mental Health in Education, 605-5-1979. 1955, B440019

attempts at synthesizing these differences or, at least, recognizing the difficulties preventing complete consistency and synthesis.⁵⁹²

In fact, Laird did not regard the program organized by Seeley as academic at all:

All the L. O.'s I talked with about the training course stressed that it was far less an academic course than a tremendous personal experience...

Was Laird's dismissal of the academic quality of the Forest Hill Village Project related to Seeley's own lack of credentials or, more likely, to snobbery about what constitutes an academic discipline? This would seem to be the assumption that lay behind the following pointed effort by Laird to keep "L. O.'s" in their place:

If the L. O. should set up to impersonate, or even allow his work, with however good intention, to be called a 'new profession' then harm rather than good is done. His previous experience, and his one year training, even with a year or two of practical application of training since, cannot bring him prestige, placing, salary and conditions of work much above other experienced teachers in his area, usually in fact not equal to status of a school principal.⁵⁹³

However, Laird did comment quite favourably on the impact of the human relations classes insofar as the liaison officers trained by Seeley and Mallinson were able to bring this teaching method back to their home schools. She highlighted the skills the liaison officers gained in conducting these classes as the most beneficial contribution they could make upon return to their home schools:

The L. O. can usually deal very well indeed with classes of children. Many school principals and their staff spoke heartily in favour of the varieties of human relations discussion groups in their schools, and benefit resulting to staff as well as pupils who participated, or even acquiesced watchfully at first. It seems to me that logically and psychologically therefore, many L. O.'s should have live contact with teacher training colleges and centres in their province, so that something at least of the benefits of human relations classes and of the techniques involved, insofar as these can be taught to others, may reach very young teacher recruits early in their training.⁵⁹⁴

⁵⁹² Isabel Laird, "Mental Health in Education": An Evaluation of the Results of a Special Mental Health Training Program for Selected Teachers", January, 1955 Ontario Archives, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, RG 10-22, File 138, Mental Health in Education, 605-5-1979. 1955, B440019

⁵⁹³ Isabel Laird, "Mental Health in Education": An Evaluation of the Results of a Special Mental Health Training Program for Selected Teachers", January, 1955 Ontario Archives, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, RG 10-22, File 138, Mental Health in Education, 605-5-1979. 1955, B440019

⁵⁹⁴ Isabel Laird, "Mental Health in Education": An Evaluation of the Results of a Special Mental Health Training Program for Selected Teachers", January, 1955 Ontario Archives, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, RG 10-22, File 138, Mental Health in Education, 605-5-1979. 1955, B440019

The determination was made then, by the Laird report, that the mental health training program set up by Seeley should be transferred into teacher's colleges in some informal way. Laird felt that it was worthwhile to continue to attempt to build the program around the human relations class pedagogy, if not to precipitously accredit it as a formal academic course of study. She concluded that "it has heightened interest in the mental health approach to educational problems among schools and communities". However, her academic doubts about the course, and her findings that "there is some evidence to show that at times the interest is negative and unfavourable", inclined her towards a proposal for a modest commitment to continued experimentation with the role of the mental health liaison officer in the schools. She therefore concluded that:

The country is not yet ready for a series of training centers geared to this level. For the time being, it should continue at Toronto and be related to a formal teacher training center.⁵⁹⁵

Now, according to Griffin's chronicle of the CMHA, this was in fact done:

Mention has already been made of the selection and training of teachers in mental health (the Liaison Officer Project) and this project continued well into the 1960s under the supervision of the Institute of Child Study at the University of Toronto. By 1962 some eighty teachers had been trained in this one year course...⁵⁹⁶

Yet, Griffin argued that the impetus for such mental health training for teachers of the kind originally envisaged in the Forest Hill Village Project foundered in the long run at OISE, and in the Ontario educational system more generally. Griffin argues that this was because of a general conservatism, and stigmatization, in relation to mental health issues. Griffin concluded when he wrote his book in 1989 that "the challenge of establishing a sound mental hygiene attitude in the schools still exists". He quotes from another follow-up study to the Forest Hill Village Project written in 1968 by Alex Sim, one of the original researchers, to explain this institutional level of resistance that ultimately led to the disappearance until recent times of the discourse of mental health in Ontario's system of public education:

The choice of the school as a fulcrum upon which to effect massive social change now appears to have been unfruitful strategy. This is not to single out the school especially as a big organization, impervious to change through its massiveness, growing power and increasing unwieldiness, but to offer strong argument for choosing a more vulnerable point of access.⁵⁹⁷

⁵⁹⁵ Isabel Laird, "'Mental Health in Education': An Evaluation of the Results of a Special Mental Health Training Program for Selected Teachers", January, 1955 Ontario Archives, National and Provincial Health Grant Research Project Files, RG 10-22, File 138, Mental Health in Education, 605-5-1979. 1955, B440019

⁵⁹⁶ Griffin, *In Search of Sanity*, 186-187.

⁵⁹⁷ Griffin, *In Search of Sanity*, 187.

iii) Adult Seminar

The contradictions between the the glossy surface of the Forest Hill Village Project and its darker underbelly are nowhere more startlingly revealed than in regard to the issue of anti-semitism. On the surface, the harmonious relations between Jews and Gentiles in Forest Hill was extolled in *Crestwood Heights* as one of the great virtues of the community. The unpublished version of *Crestwood Heights* reveals, however, that ethnic tensions were a major concern of the adult community behind closed doors. We know of these concerns because of parental participation in a series of adult study groups, alternatively referred to as “Adult Seminars”. These seminars were organized by the leaders of the Forest Hill Village Project, especially Seeley and Sim, through the school’s Home and School Association. According to an entry on January 24th, 1950 in the “Minute Book of the Forest Hill Village Home and School Association, 1949 – 1953”, the Adult Seminars appeared to be well attended:

Dr. Seeley’s Seminar Group has speakers on Education. There are in all a total of 11 study groups....the study groups are functioning with good attendance....February 14th will be Father’s Night....⁵⁹⁸

Of course, as we can see in the special attention given in the minute book to the participation of the fathers in the Adult Seminars, as if it was something out of the ordinary to have them involved, it was primarily the mothers who attended. Now, given that the Home and School Association itself was so popular in the community, it is not surprising that Seeley and Sim had been able to attract a large number of Village women to participate in these seminars. In fact, according to *Crestwood Heights*, the Home and School Association reached the “pinnacle of power in the community” during the time period of the Forest Hill Village Project.⁵⁹⁹ In another minute book entry for March 25th, the large membership numbers were proudly brought to the attention of the meeting and duly noted:

Membership Mrs. Graham announced that there were 2046 members of the Forest Hill Home and School Associations – an increase of 346 over the last year’s registration. There are 11 honorary members and 101 Staff members bringing the total to 2163.⁶⁰⁰

As to the content of the discussions that were held in the Adult Seminars, according to the minutes the focus varied. Most of the topics taken up by various groups related to psychological questions like,

⁵⁹⁸ Minute Book of the Forest Hill Village Home and School Association, 1949 – 1953 January 24th, 1950, Forest Hill Village Collegiate Library

⁵⁹⁹ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 265.

⁶⁰⁰ Minute Book of the Forest Hill Village Home and School Association, 1949 – 1953 January 24th, 1950, Forest Hill Village Collegiate Library

“Child Adjustment Problems, Family Relations, Adjusting to the Opposite Sex, Achieving Emancipation, Looking at Ourselves, Discipline, and Adolescence”. In addition, Alex Sim held an Adult Seminar on “Special Projects”.

Jewish and Gentile relations in Forest Hill, a community evenly populated by both groups, was nowhere on the list of topics according to the “Minute Book”. However, in the Chapter of *Crestwood Heights* entitled, “Parent Education”, an excerpt from a document that originated out of the Project work in the Adult Seminars demonstrates that the issue of Jewish-Gentile relations was addressed, however obliquely:

Both Jewish and Gentile women joined the seminars; but at no time were there more than thirty women in these groups during any one year. Topics discussed included personality and culture theory; educational philosophy and the school, Jewish- Gentile values; a study of the family; reports by mothers on the day-to-day happenings in the home; reading of, and comments on, some of the research in progress. At least two women enrolled in university courses in sociology as a direct result of their seminar participation.

The seminars were not without strain for many members. Especially difficult was the realization that the experts in this case offered no panacea or even solution for the problems raised. Stereotypes and traditional habits of thought were challenged, particularly in the area of Jewish-Gentile relations. Women confessed frequently to members of the research staff that they were deeply disturbed by facts brought forward during the discussions. At other times, seminar members reported relief after clarification of a social reality bearing, for them, an intimate and profound connotation. Some women, unable to stand the stress of these discussions, dropped out....⁶⁰¹

The emphasis in *Crestwood Heights* on the place of Jewish-Gentile issues in the Adult Seminars was on how they served as a “central integrating point between the two ethnic groups in Crestwood Heights”.⁶⁰² We hasten to point out that the closest the book actually comes to acknowledging the realities of Jewish-Gentile tensions in Forest Hill was in a brief two page discussion as part of the chapter on “Parent Education”. In the context of more than 400 pages of ethnographical detail about the culture of Forest Hill Village, this brief discussion of Jewish – Gentile tensions constitutes avoidance of the question. Moreover, as was typical of the time, to the extent that *Crestwood Heights* did address these issues, the perspective adopted was to emphasize that the Jewish community voluntarily participated in their own oppression.

For example, the book points out, “No Jewish woman has at the time of writing been President of the central Home and School organization”. Yet the book explains this obvious example of

⁶⁰¹ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 286.

⁶⁰² Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 286.

discrimination as a “joint effect of Gentile and Jewish wishes”, which was, “carefully maintained, largely through the clique structure of the Home and School Association, which operates by telephone behind the official scenes”.⁶⁰³ The book goes on to emphasize that the Jewish community was willing to make such sacrifices because they “prize their half-acceptance by the Gentiles”. The authors of *Crestwood Heights* were willing to go so far as to suggest that, “For the sake of acceptance by Gentiles, the Jews are prepared to support the status quo on the Board of Education, in the Home and School Association, and in the school system”, even though, “time may very well bring about a situation in the schools where all the students will be Jewish, although the school staff and administration would remain Gentile”. The text fails to explain at this point that the reason for the growing majority of Jews in the public schools of Forest Hill was not only that there was such a large influx of the Jewish population after the war, but also that many of the wealthier Gentile families of Forest Hill sent their children to local private schools like Upper Canada College and Bishop Strachan where Jews were not admitted.

Not only was the topic of Jewish-Gentile relations avoided on the surface in the Adult Seminars, its more difficult aspects also never found their way into the text of *Crestwood Heights*. Instead, the book emphasizes the stereotype of conformity and homogeny in the cultural life of the suburbs that predominated in the pop sociology of the time period:

In this study, we as social scientists have attempted to look at some facts about child growth as it takes place in a comparatively homogenous, prosperous, modern, urban and suburban environment.⁶⁰⁴

While the book does not completely ignore the reality of two cultural solitudes in Forest Hill, *Crestwood Heights* seeks to create a picture of over-riding pressures toward assimilation between the two groups. In other words, Seeley suggested that the shared interest of the two groups in the values surrounding the Hollywood-manufactured, “American Dream,” prevailed over their more distinct cultural heritage as Jews or Gentiles. This is evident in the first reference in the book to the bi-culturalism of the community in which Seeley suggested that both groups show:

....a deep allegiance to the great North American dream, a dream of a material heaven in the here and now, to be entered by the successful elect....Once there, the grandchild of Irish peasants, propelled towards North America by the dream, could no more freely shed his cultural inheritance of thrift and industry, hoarding and frugality, than could the Jewish child of ghetto parentage cast off completely his age-old fear of segregation and persecution.⁶⁰⁵

⁶⁰³ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 287.

⁶⁰⁴ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 4.

⁶⁰⁵ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 7.

Seeley does here grant some recognition to the historical position of the two cultures, although already the book is seemingly oblivious to the terrible reality of the Holocaust which must have been affecting the lives of the Jewish community very deeply in the post-war period. The potential confusion around whether the tensions in Jewish-Gentile relations were real according to the published version of *Crestwood Heights*, is cleared up in the following paragraph:

Because there are few strong ties of locality or kinship, a man is judged largely by the number and quality of the things he owns....The accumulation of the latest and best materially is paralleled by an urge to acquire the latest and best in ideas, values and 'experiences'. These are diligently 'collected', often with little apparent reference to the person's own tastes or interests. A cult, a political party, a traditional religious denomination or a university education may be 'collected' and cherished in much the same fashion as a new car or a television set – and with much of the same desire to impress othersThe Churches too, on the fringes of Crestwood Heights, offer various forms of spiritual solace, from which one may make a selection. No longer need one feel compelled to attend a synagogue in the working class 'Ward' Sabbath after Sabbath, or sit in the family pew of a half-empty downtown church. One may go to a beautiful new 'Temple', even, on occasion, with Gentile friends; one may try, if the more conventional denominations do not satisfy, the congregation of the Unitarians, where all are welcome, or enjoy a cosy fireside, in the home of a Baha'i.⁶⁰⁶

Now it is plain that within the first ten pages of *Crestwood Heights* an assimilationist model of the relationships between Jews and Gentiles in Forest Hill is being observed and reinforced. *Crestwood Heights* is putting forward the thesis that any tensions between Jews and Gentiles in Forest Hill were subsumed within a larger cohesiveness in regard to the values of the American Dream. We see references to this assimilationist model of ethnic relations in Forest Hill running throughout the text. To give but a few more examples, in the following passage the sense in which the norms of family life were conceived of as universal at the time is articulated:

There does....appear to be emerging an ideal pattern of family living to which both Jewish and Gentile families would subscribe, a pattern which has been considerably influenced by the developing social sciences and their representatives near and far....⁶⁰⁷

This new norm of family life is described as "democratic" by the authors of *Crestwood Heights* in contrast to the more patriarchal traditions of either Jewish or Christian households in previous eras. Indeed, such heavy-handed authoritarian parenting methods as were common in Victorian times are pathologized, according to Seeley, in the post-war era. He quotes from Dr. Maltby's report of what she found through her work in the Child Guidance Clinic:

⁶⁰⁶ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 9.

⁶⁰⁷ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 164.

The majority of anti-social problems occurred in children of authoritarian fathers. All problems tended to be concentrated in children of authoritarian fathers and or overdominant or oversolicitous mothers, relatively fewer problems occurring when parents were indulgent or over-permissive.⁶⁰⁸

According to Seeley, in fact, religious differences fell into second place behind the emerging scientifically-defined family values. This was reflected physically in the fact that the Churches and Synagogues were losing their place in the community to the schools:

Crestwood Heights is a community with a constantly growing Jewish population, although Gentiles still retain an uneasy majority. It is perhaps symbolic of its mixed ethnic character that there are no large churches or synagogues within its boundaries. It is rather, the school which dominates the community as an institution: officially neutral as to religion or politics, and dedicated to the maturity values which regulate its progressive education as well as the democratic functioning of the family. It is against the background of this shift in population and this developing competing ideology that the religious activities of the family must be considered.⁶⁰⁹

In a most provocative passage, without stating it explicitly, Seeley seems to suggest that this falling away of religion has to do principally with the distinct needs of people in an other-directed society. In other words, religion is to serve the instrumental needs of people in a capitalist society, or it is left by wayside:

Thus the religious activities of the Crestwood Heights family, like those of the school, serve to gird the child with the minimum of spiritual armor, which may be shed easily in favor of other defences, should it be experienced as obsolete or cumbersome. For the runner of the Crestwood race needs first and foremost to be free for the course he has to follow. He cannot afford to be held back by old-fashioned beliefs...⁶¹⁰

When the documents and events in Forest Hill from the time of the project are reviewed, and the importance of issues between Gentiles and Jews in the community is fully revealed, the reader is compelled to question whether ethnicity had in fact receded in importance to the extent *Crestwood Heights* suggests. The claim that religious differences in Forest Hill in the fifties were superficial might have served as a form of repression or diversion in respect of this issue. Indeed, the elite who funded the Forest Hill Village Project had an interest in covering up Jewish-Gentile issues because of their explosive potential at this time in history.

⁶⁰⁸ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 168.

⁶⁰⁹ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 212.

⁶¹⁰ Seeley sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 222.

xii) A Singular Omission

Seeley himself later admitted that the complete lack of any mention of the Holocaust in *Crestwood Heights*, or in any of the Forest Hill Village Papers, was a “rather singular omission”.⁶¹¹ He was referring, I assumed, to the fact that the Forest Hill Village Project had taken place in the immediate aftermath of World War II. This omission is particularly surprising given that, as we have already seen, one of the original aims of the research component of the Forest Hill Village Project was: “A study of the pattern and the transmission of anti-semitism.”⁶¹² It would certainly have been logical at this time for public policy makers to be concerned, not only about the causes of such virulent outbreaks of anti-semitism, but also about the consequences of the trauma in Europe for the large numbers of Holocaust survivors who came to Forest Hill as emigrants. It is important to point out that, in fact, most of the 30, 000 to 35, 000 survivors and their descendents who came to Canada between 1945 and 1956, settled in Toronto. Moreover, this group of survivors came to constitute up to 15 – 20% of the local Jewish population in the Greater Metropolitan Toronto area which by 1961 had reached a total of about 89, 000 Jewish inhabitants.⁶¹³ These numbers only serve to reinforce the curiosity that is stimulated by the failure of John R. Seeley and the Forest Hill Village Project to address the social impact of the Holocaust. After all, we must not forget that Seeley was himself of Jewish origin and must have been acutely aware of such issues.

The most compelling argument that has been put forward to explain the general silence about the Holocaust in Canada during the immediate period after the war is given by Franklin Bialystok in *Delayed Impact*, where he observes that the Jewish community itself, for many complicated reasons, sought to avoid the issue:

Interest in the Holocaust was late in coming. For the first twenty years after the war, Canadians knew little about the event. This amnesia was not restricted to the gentile world, it was also pervasive within the Canadian Jewish community, as it was in other Jewish communities outside continental Europe. Certainly, many Canadian Jews had lost family members and now lived with the reality that a civilization had been destroyed, but the community, as represented by its leaders, did little to instill knowledge of the catastrophe, and there was no grassroots desire for this situation to change.⁶¹⁴

According to Bialystok, for the survivors, the memories were often too fresh and painful to be spoken of. They sought to protect their children from the pain, and shame, of what had happened to them.

⁶¹¹ Interviews with John R Seeley, March 2007, Los Angeles California

⁶¹² Memorandum from Seeley to Stokes, Forest Hill Village Project – Report, June 30th, 1949 Seeley Papers, Los Angeles California,

⁶¹³ Franklin Bialystok, *Delayed Impact: The Holocaust and the Canadian Jewish Community* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2000), 73-74.

⁶¹⁴ Bialystok, *Delayed Impact*, 6.

These “greenies” busied themselves with making good, for in a way none of us have experienced, they knew what it meant to have been given a second chance. For the community, the Holocaust was seen at first as a “blot on Jewish history”. Like so many victims, they blamed themselves for not successfully resisting this attack, or for collaborating in their own self-destruction. Thus, Jewish schools omitted teaching about the Holocaust, Jewish newspapers “ignored the topic”, and the leaders of the Canadian Jewish Congress, “had little to say about the impact of the Holocaust on Canadian Jews”.⁶¹⁵ According to Bialystok, the Jewish community as a whole was, like the “greenies”, more concerned during the fifties with fitting in than with dealing with the ghosts of the past. Overall, Bialystok’s analysis resonates very well with what had been reported in *Crestwood Heights*:

All in all, the 1950s were a decade of profound and lasting change for the Jewish community. Its population grew by 35 per cent, of whom one-half were Holocaust survivors. Economic prosperity and the decline of anti-semitism also contributed to the transformation. The decade was marked by the transition from the traditional immigrant inner-city neighbourhoods to the suburbs, accompanied by the erosion of traditional structures, religious and secular, that had cemented the community for decades. In their stead, large congregations emerged, the social services became professionalized, and long held ideological positions that had provided the vitality and culture of the community evaporated. For the first time, some doors were opened to Jews in employment, education, and housing, and most took advantage of this situation. Young adults did not follow their seniors into factories and shops, but availed themselves of the opportunities now open to them and became disproportionately represented in the professions and in graduate schools and universities. They were the first Canadian Jews to adopt English as the language of the home and workplace exclusively....With an emphasis on turning themselves into ordinary Canadians, established Jews were abandoning the connection to their European roots....⁶¹⁶

What was not said in *Crestwood Heights* was that this success drive, common to Jewish and Gentile alike in the post-war era, may have been particularly powerful in the Jewish community to compensate for their initial shame about the recent events of the Holocaust. Indeed, this drive may not only explain the economic success of the ‘greenies’ but also that of their children who, as Bialystok notes, were “disproportionately represented in the professions”. For, despite the best efforts of their parents to spare them, these children of survivors came to know very deeply what had happened. As one of them said to me in the context of telling a story about how his mother, who was a survivor of Auschwitz, had left the house for weeks after encountering a mouse, “we did not have to talk about it, we lived it”.⁶¹⁷ Unlike in Bialystok’s book, the authors of *Crestwood Heights* seemed oblivious to this deeper reality of Holocaust memory that underlay the post-war silence of the Jewish community on this crucial issue. Was this because they were fooled by this silence into believing that

⁶¹⁵ Bialystok, *Delayed Impact*, 71.

⁶¹⁶ Bialystok, *Delayed Impact*, 72.

⁶¹⁷ Personal Interview with Ernie Erdos, 21 November 2010

it did not matter? It is more likely that, as a Jew who was himself also traumatized by the experiences of anti-semitism in Europe as a child, Seeley participated in the silencing of his people for his own benefit, if not for theirs.

Thus, the silence of *Crestwood Heights* on the question of the Holocaust resonated with the reality and the desires of the Village of Forest Hill at the time. However, there are some hints in the unpublished version of *Crestwood Heights* that this silence was at least to an extent as much imposed as it was welcomed. From the beginning of the Project to the end there was evidence of tensions in the Village between Jews and Gentiles. These were intense enough that one participant in the Adult Seminars suggested in a letter to Seeley that they became the central focus of the seminars in the place of the ostensible purpose of discussing child rearing issues:

It seemed to me that you came into the community when the anxious trial and error attempts of a number of people to stem the separation desires of the majority in both groups was approaching its peak, and, at least from what I knew of your activities, these were the people with whom you had many contacts. Although I believe this group had various motives and understandings, I think they agreed that, to them, contact was a better policy than separation. I believed and explained in my attempt to describe the Seminar group, that contact was the underlying motive. It was expressed to me by some in the seminar that discussion of the warp and woof of life would lead to group disintegration, and by others, that not to discuss such affairs would lead to disintegration. All seemed to desire the same end but differed regarding the means. It appeared to me that specific child rearing topics were only discussed when tensions became too difficult....⁶¹⁸

The perception of Mary Doan that the participants in the Forest Hill Village Project Seminars were preoccupied with Jewish-Gentile issues is borne out in the notes taken by Sim, Loosley and other members of the Project team. In the first place, the notes confirm that there was discussion and disagreement in the Adult Seminars over how to handle ethnic tensions within each group. For example, one Jewish female participant in a Seminar with Alex Sim made the following comment:

Re – breaking our Group into Jewish and Gentile factions. I think it is a very ill-advised thing to do. I don't agree with Dot Henderson that it might be indicative of defeat. It could only be experimental, nothing else. Visualize an all Gentile Group. Mrs S. knows Mrs K. very well, hence Mrs S. cloaks her opinions in heavy veiling. She wants to keep on being friendly – she wishes to invite no strained feelings. But the discussion proceeds and rather petty points are picked up and attacked. No one gets hurt. It becomes an artificial sort of discussion. I may be wrong, but I rather experienced this sort of thing myself – and thenceforward vowed to silence. I evidently sounded anti-semitic – and shocked a member of the group – or felt I did. A Jew mustn't knock a Jew. We, the persecuted are too

⁶¹⁸ Mary Doan to Seeley, October 28th, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

vulnerable – have suffered too much and are too damned sensitive. Hence an all Jewish Group – or an all Gentile group is a negative undertaking in my humble opinion.⁶¹⁹

The notes also confirm as might be expected, that the talk around the Village gave vent to a generalized anxiety about the influx of Jews in the post-war period. The fact is that the Jewish population in Forest Hill between 1941 and 1951 increased from 11 percent to 40 percent of the total population. By the 1960s the majority of people living in Forest Hill were Jewish.⁶²⁰ Strangely, however, in his letter of response to Mary Doan, Seeley claims to have been oblivious to the fact that addressing issues in Jewish-Gentile relations was a dominant area of concern for the participants in the Forest Hill Village Project:

Some of the material in your letter is not only extraordinarily helpful but is news of the first importance. The fact that it is news, after a five or six year exposure to the community, is of course itself significant. What you say about developing an interest area as a conscious attempt to prevent the separation of Jews and Gentiles in the Village is extremely important. The fact that up to this point no one had told us this or anything like it or even hinted at it throws fresh light either on village life or our interpenetration with it or both....⁶²¹

A cursory review of the themes in Jewish-Gentile relations that recurred time and again in the notes of the Project Staff reveals that either Seeley had not paid any attention to what his staff had done, which is possible given his general aversion to research; or that, for some reason, Seeley was being highly disingenuous in his response to Mrs. Doan. The resentment toward Jewish migration into the suburbs seemed to focus around suspicions that Jews had not come by their money honestly. In other words, the notes give us variations on the ancient Gentile myth of the Jew as “Shylock”, a ruthless and greedy money lender. In Alex Sim’s notes, one woman participant in the Adults Seminars came up with the following list of Gentile complaints:

1. All Jews are rich
2. Jewish Children are luxuriously dressed
3. All Jews have Television
4. All Jews have mink coats.⁶²²

And she writes, “This one’s on me – I’ve heard it oft repeated: ‘There isn’t a Gentile who sincerely likes a Jew’”. In a more subtle, but perhaps also more menacing way because of the source, the same

⁶¹⁹ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

⁶²⁰ Leon Whiteson, “Looking at Toronto”, *Toronto Star* July 4th, November 1981

⁶²¹ Mary Doan to Seeley, October 28th, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶²² Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

suspicions seemed to be latent in the following comment made to Alex Sim November 7th 1949 by Forest Hill Police Chief Frazer, “The Jews will pay two or three thousand dollars more than anyone else to get into the Village”. Another woman, who attended Sim’s Adult Seminar, wrote to him that, “I’ve heard it said that people, particularly Jews, made a good deal of money during the war, and moved to Forest Hill”. She expanded on the theme of suspicion about Jewish successes in business in a little anecdotal story she passed along to Sim:

In conversation with a gentleman I told him my Dad was a blouse manufacturer. He then very seriously asked me how my Dad could possibly compete with THOSE PEOPLE. “What People”, I asked, innocently – “you know, those Jews”. “Well,” I said, “I have no desire to embarrass you, but the reason my father gets along so well is because he is one of those people”. The chap was quite flustered and said,

“But you don’t look Jewish”

“What is looking Jewish”

“Well, you speak so quietly”

“Many Jews do”

“Well, you dress so neatly”

“Many Jews do. I think you must have had an unfortunate experience with some Jewish firm. Did you?”

“Yes, yes, etc... & etc...”

He apologized himself right into Windsor stadium in Montreal – ending up with the classic – “some of my best friends are Jews”....⁶²³

The resentment toward upwardly mobile Jews is revealed in the Project notes to also emanate from the working class Jews of Toronto who were left behind when the wealthier members of their community moved north during the war. According to Sim’s notes, it was common amongst them to speak, “disparagingly about Mortgage Hill”. Some also referred with similar derision to the new Reform Synagogue, Holy Blossom Temple, built in Forest Hill in 1938 as the “Church on the Hill”.⁶²⁴ Also, in a somewhat humorous vein, Sim summons up the following vignette:

Somewhere in the files there is an anecdote about a Jewish family whose less wealthy relatives continued to visit them – in trucks and broken down jalopies – and the ensuing remarks made by other residents on the street.⁶²⁵

It may be that there was nothing more to the tensions revealed in the above excerpts than what might be expected at any time or place as a result of sudden demographic change. However, it would be

⁶²³ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

⁶²⁴ Interview with Sharon D’Errico, 15 May 2012

⁶²⁵ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

hard to imagine that the trauma of the Holocaust did not play some unique role in the intensity of feeling around Jewish-Gentile relations during the time of the Forest Hill Village Project. If there is a sign of this in the Project notes, it would seem to have been expressed in the anxiety over proposals to segregate Jewish and Gentile members of the Adult Seminars. While it might seem remarkable to our 21st-century sensibilities that segregation of the seminars was even considered, in the eyes of Jewish families in the late 1940s, especially those of survivors, anything that smacked of ghettoization must have been viewed with deep mistrust. Indeed, the one place in the Project notes where we see a subtle reference to the Holocaust was in regard to the storm that took place in the Forest Hill community in 1950 about a proposal to segregate classes in the High School.

Ostensibly, the decision of the Forest Hill School Board to assign students to their high school classes based on ethnicity was for the sake of “better balance”, in the words of then Superintendent of Schools for Forest Hill, Don Graham.⁶²⁶ The *Toronto Daily Star* reported sympathetically on Graham’s, “scheme under which classes have been re-grouped and four all-Jewish classes formed in the predominantly Jewish student body, in order to increase the ratio of non-Jewish students in the other classes”.⁶²⁷ Rather than refer to the “scheme” as “anti-semitic segregation”, as had been done in the rival tabloid *Flash*, the *Star* used a more scientific sounding label, referring to it as an “Educational Experiment”. Indeed, the *Star* reported that the H. Rogers, the Chairman of the Forest Hill Village Board of Education, said that “complaints of segregation are ridiculous”. In order to further accentuate this aura of scientific neutrality around the “scheme”, the *Star* sought to portray it as a strictly administrative maneuver:

...there was no pressure from outside groups advocating the change, and school officials themselves worked it out, then got the go-ahead from the Board of Education. Since then Mr. Graham has been waging a vigorous campaign of informing parents of the reasons for the set-up, and the way it works.

The plan is in effect only in the classes from Grade 8 to 12. In each of these grades, one class has purposely been made up of all Jewish students, increasing the ratio of non-Jewish students in the other classes.⁶²⁸

⁶²⁶ “Wait, See’ Attitude on Forest Hill C.I. Education Experiment”, *Toronto Daily Star*, Saturday October 14th, 1950,

⁶²⁷ “Wait, See’ Attitude on Forest Hill C.I. Education Experiment”, *Toronto Daily Star*, Saturday October 14th, 1950

⁶²⁸ “Wait, See’ Attitude on Forest Hill C.I. Education Experiment”, *Toronto Daily Star*, Saturday October 14th, 1950

Clayton Ruby's father's tabloid, *Flash*, also went along with the attempt of the *Toronto Daily Star* and the Forest Hill School Board to circumvent potential social resistance by portraying the "scheme" using the politically-neutral sounding language of "ratio's", and "balance":

As the school student body is composed of a majority of pupils of Jewish origin, Mr. Graham had to take all the gentile students from one of the classes and distribute them throughout the other four, in order to equalize the percentage of Jews and gentiles. This balanced the population in four of the rooms in each upper grade but left one class composed solely of Jewish youngsters.⁶²⁹

Like the *Star*, the *Flash* article also sought to diffuse the politicization of the issue by reducing the "scheme" to a purely administrative matter:

Treating the matter as a singularly administrative job, Mr. Graham naturally did not consult parents and school area residents before introducing the juggle of classrooms.⁶³⁰

These attempts to neutralize the issue of instituting racially segregated classrooms in Forest Hill by appeal to the norms of modernist scientific discourse, which were used un-self-consciously at the time, are an excellent demonstration of how language can be used as a form of power. Of course, if we read the subtext of these newspaper articles alongside the unpublished version of *Crestwood Heights*, we see that the segregation issue was anything but a simple matter of "balance".

The most striking feature of the controversy over anti-semitic segregation that emerges from the unpublished version of *Crestwood Heights*, is that it was blamed on the unrealistic sensitivities of the Holocaust survivors. Contrary to the story told by Bialystok in *Delayed Impact* survivors may not have always wanted to remain entirely silent during the fifties. But it was not just the survivors; the newspaper coverage of the classroom segregation issue suggests that there was considerable uproar in general. *Flash* wrote about the, "reports and rumours of anti-semitic segregation which have been permeating Toronto lately". The *Toronto Daily Star* also reported on the "Forest Hill CI experiment":

Rabbi A. L. Feinberg chairman of the Canadian Jewish Congress and a leader in Forest Hill Jewry, last night assured a crowded open forum at Holy Blossom Temple that the people of good will in the village who are studying the new scheme of regrouping students in the collegiate would not scuttle the principles of freedom and non-discrimination for which Jewish people have fought for hundreds

⁶²⁹ "Anti-Semitic Segregation Not So Says Rabbi of Forest Hill School", *Flash*, October 14th, 1950

⁶³⁰ "Anti-Semitic Segregation Not So Says Rabbi of Forest Hill School", *Flash*, October 14th, 1950

of years. The meeting, which included a large number of Forest Hill residents, indicated the probable attitude of Forest Hill Jews to the plan: a wait-and-see, don't get alarmed attitude.⁶³¹

Was this really the probable attitude of the Jewish community in Forest Hill, or was it the attitude the papers and the institutional leaders from the School Board to the Jewish Congress wanted to inculcate? In any event, given that this "crowded" meeting took place, it is clear there was considerable concern in the Jewish community about the classroom segregation issue.

Someone from the Forest Hill Village Project research team attended this meeting and took quite revealing notes about what happened under the title, "How to Murder a Community" Sermon by Rabbi Feinberg, Filed under "Churches" (the segregation of the classrooms issue).⁶³² The note-taker did not refer to the re-grouping scheme as an educational experiment, but, calling a-spade-a-spade, referred to it as "segregation" because that was the way everyone on the street talked about it. The fact that the events of the Holocaust had an important impact on the reaction in the Jewish community seems to be implicit in the title chosen by Rabbi Feinberg for his sermon. The title is ironic because Feinberg intended to compare those who were questioning the School Board's classroom segregation policy to the Biblical figure of Cain who murders his brother. His suggestion was that their over-reaction to a policy that was well intentioned would only serve to increase frictions between the Jewish and Gentile members of the Forest Hill Community. In this way, the protestors might become, like Cain, the "murderer's of their community". The *Toronto Daily Star* reported on this aspect of the sermon in the following way:

Rabbi Feinberg based his sermon on the story of Cain and Abel. "Thirty centuries ago the shepherd and the farmer were of the same family and faith, scattered over a huge territory. And still they smote one another. Today, all racial origins, all creeds are thrown together cheek to jowl into close contact: one city block may contain a whole world of diversity.

The intensity and complexity of populations meant frictions could be magnified beyond count, until thousands of people in a small area unwittingly become each one of them a Cain bent on the murder of a community".⁶³³

It is hard not to read a particular commentary on the Holocaust into this presentation of the segregation issue, the message being that in Europe the suffering of the Jewish people had been caused by their own mistrustfulness and political meddling. In other words, the real message

⁶³¹ "Wait, See' Attitude on Forest Hill C.I. Education Experiment", *Toronto Daily Star*, Saturday October 14th, 1950

⁶³² Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

⁶³³ "Wait, See' Attitude on Forest Hill C.I. Education Experiment", *Toronto Daily Star*, Saturday October 14th, 1950

Feinberg was trying to deliver was something like, “let’s not make the same mistake here that they made in Europe and get ourselves in a lot of trouble, even to the point where they murder our community”. Instead, he suggested that the school leaders be given the benefit of the doubt and priority be placed on maintaining good relations with the Gentiles.

But Rabbi Feinberg was an American born-Jew who had no personal experience of what had happened in Europe. Like many other Jews who had grown up in relative safety in North America, and who were anxious to take advantage of the opportunities for economic progress that the post-war era offered, his tendency was to assume that the “greenies” had maybe done something to deserve their terrible fate, as had the Biblical figure of Cain. Unlike their European ancestors, the already Americanized-Jews were not interested in continuing the pattern of dispersion that tormented the children of Cain. Indeed, they wanted to reverse that pattern by getting along in the multi-cultural mosaic of North America. However, this attitude came into direct conflict with the experience of the Holocaust survivors arriving in great numbers in Forest Hill. Their memories of torture and loss only convinced them of the necessity for fierce resistance to any signs of anti-semitism.

The fact that it was the Holocaust survivors who agitated against the school’s segregation policy is suggested in the following note taken by the member of the Forest Hill Village Project Staff who attended Rabbi Feinberg’s sermon:

A questioner asked Feinberg to elaborate on his sermon statement that “children were better community leaders”. Feinberg replied that he did not say “better community leaders”. He then expanded the theme of those adults who had suffered in Europe and as a consequence were more ready to see threats to their security than would the children. “We must be less emotional and less ready to jump to hasty conclusions”. The questioner then said he had been at a dinner tonight with a Forest Hill Village family and the girl had said the kids were quite happy about the classroom arrangements, whereupon the mother had rebuked her for saying this. Feinberg observed, “You mean the parent was more worried about the child’s experiences than the child who was having the experience?”

Question from behind me – What is so terrible about all this? Why is there all this agitation? The kids aren’t agitating – the parents are....⁶³⁴

Feinberg’s concern was obviously that the survivors who had been through the Holocaust might be exercising undue influence in the Jewish Community in Forest Hill. The parents’ natural desire to protect their children was fobbed off by Feinberg as “emotional” and “hasty”, in contrast to the naïve

⁶³⁴Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

innocence of the children, whose reaction better served his agenda. The *Toronto Daily Star's* report on the Holy Blossom Temple meeting also noted the connections that were being made in the meeting to the Holocaust:

Questioned later in the forum the rabbi explained that, “adults are too often conditioned by experience and preconceptions and prejudices. Adults are in the same relation to children as Jews who had gone through the pogroms of the Nazis and the Fascists were to those who had lived all their lives in Canada.”⁶³⁵

Feinberg's claim here was that the sensitivities of the survivor's was a form of prejudice in contrast to his more-enlightened progressivism on matters of racial relations. He was claiming that his conditioning was superior in these matters because he had not been persecuted like the Holocaust survivors. From the perspective of 21st-century Jews who have themselves experienced the emergence of neo-fascist movements and the continuing struggles of Israel, it may have been Rabbi Feinberg's conditioning that was the more illusory.

As to the children themselves, unlike what Feinberg and others at the meeting assumed about their being unaffected by the racial prejudices of the adults, it would appear that they too were distressed in their own ways about Jewish-Gentile issues. According to *Crestwood Heights*, the issue of segregation not only reared its ugly head in relation to the Adult Seminars and the Classroom, it also affected the high school fraternities and sororities associated with the High School that were so popular across North America in the fifties. The fact is the students themselves practiced segregation between Jews and Gentiles through their selection practices for these teenage clubs. When, at a “joint meeting of parents and collegiate students to discuss the problem of fraternities and sororities”, the parents objected to the practice of such blatant discrimination, the students were quick to point out the hypocrisy of the adults. The students brought forward examples of similar adult forms of exclusion practiced in organizations from the United Nations to the Forest Hill School System itself. In the only reference to the classroom segregation issue that was allowed to find its way into the text of *Crestwood Heights*, one student is reported to have challenged the Collegiate Principal on this point:

Student (Female): You say that the school has always been democratic and not shown discrimination. How about the segregation of the Jewish and Gentile classes that took place two years ago?

⁶³⁵ “Wait, See’ Attitude on Forest Hill C.I. Education Experiment”, *Toronto Daily Star*, Saturday October 14th, 1950

She was groaned down. Several teachers spoke at once, saying that the move had been taken all in good faith, that it was an error, and had been corrected: that the school was not infallible; that they tried to correct all such errors immediately etc....⁶³⁶

The authors of *Crestwood Heights* chose to limit their explanation of this excerpt to a footnote in which they try to excuse their omission on the basis of not having enough space in the book to deal with it:

This reference is to an event not reported in this book because it and its repercussions would require a separate chapter.⁶³⁷

According to Seeley, the importance of the issue of Jewish-Gentile segregation also emerged amongst the adolescent population in the human relations classes. Seeley said, in regard to the dating issue in particular, that:

If in a Jewish family a girl fell in love with a gentile, suddenly an unknown grandma would appear for dinner, then grandma would discourage the Jewish girl and she would be sent off to a Jewish school or out of town. Exile to prevent inter-mixing. Torrents of emotion. Deceived, banished by their own parents. After 2-3 weeks damning their parents they began to wonder, “when I get to be a parent, will I do any better”. They started to invent ways that parents might not deceive their children.⁶³⁸

This was also reported in Tom Mallinson’s Ph. D. thesis on the human relations classes in which he wrote that:

...they were able to share in an honest discussion of their feelings around the vital area to (to them) of Jewish-Gentile dating, marriage and courtship; what the problem was; and why it was so complicated; and what they could do about it. The terminal point at the end of the year was; no agreement amongst them as to what should be done about the problem, but some clarification as to where they stood, and in a final burst of insight, some notion of what kind of character is required if you are going to build a new world in which you are willing to over-step traditional bounds, be they right or wrong.⁶³⁹

In another revealing passage in Mallinson’s thesis concerning the Forest Hill Collegiate student discussions in their human relations classes about race, one that was never reported in any published article by Seeley or Mallinson, a very young group of students made their way toward the important issue of Jewish–Gentile relations via the underground railroad, in a manner of speaking:

⁶³⁶ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 332.

⁶³⁷ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 321-332.

⁶³⁸ Interviews with John R. Seeley

⁶³⁹ Thomas Mallinson, *An Experimental Investigation of Group-Directed Discussion in the Classroom*, Ph.d. Thesis, 1955, Department of Psychology, University of Toronto Archives, 39.

Another class – this time a grade 7 class – showed quite a remarkable example of exploring their feelings under the guise of an apparently unrelated topic. Initial sessions of this class discussed at length the question of slavery in the early Americas. Gradually, the discussion moved toward the question of the treatment of the negro today, but when this was related to a recent example of discrimination in a nearby small town, the discussion immediately veered back to conditions many years ago. Again the discussion turned to more recent times and immediate surroundings, but when a local club was cited as discriminating against negroes, and a boy asked if they had any other kinds of discrimination there, the class again veered away from the question. It was not until two or three sessions later that the class was able to verbalize, and look at, their feelings about discrimination against Jews – a problem that was of quite some concern to the community in which they lived, hence to them. Although, again, no final agreement was reached, there was considerable discussion and clarification of the core issue.⁶⁴⁰

It is clear then, from a look at the various levels at which anti-semitism plagued the Village of Forest Hill at the time of Seeley and the Project, that it was a heated issue. Contrary to Seeley's claim in *Crestwood Heights* that there was a convergence of interest around the instrumentality of religion between the Jewish and Gentile communities in Forest Hill, it would seem that in fact there was active segregation at a number of levels. Indeed, recognition of the full extent of the segregation that was taking place between Jews and Gentiles in Forest Hill during the fifties might seem to contradict the theory of a "delayed impact" of the memory of the Holocaust on Canadian social life. The reality may have been that the impact of the Holocaust was not so much delayed as held back. Rather than the memory of the Holocaust being temporarily buried in the unconscious, it was politically suppressed.

Repression of the memory of the Holocaust served the interests of the hierarchy in maintaining social order. These forces included the media whose spin on the issue was to dismiss the concerns as "idle talk" in the words of *Flash*; the Board of Education whose chairman called concerns about segregation, "ridiculous"; and, the Canadian Jewish Congress and its spokesperson Rabbi Feinberg who suggested that the Jewish survivors were "prejudiced" by their traumatic experiences in Europe. Feinberg's approach was to attempt to mollify the community with public reassurances to the effect that "...what Mr. Graham has done to better overall relations between Jewish and Christian children will ultimately be of great benefit to all of Canada", while at the same time working behind the scenes to quietly ensure that the practice of regrouping classrooms was put to an end. According to Martin Sable, Feinberg's approach was effective:

⁶⁴⁰ Thomas Mallinson, *An Experimental Investigation of Group-Directed Discussion in the Classroom*, Ph.d. Thesis, 1955, Department of Psychology, University of Toronto Archives, 39.

Congress objected, but very carefully, couching its objections in terms of a breach of democratic principles. Indeed, Congress backed off quickly when the Forest Hill Board of Education agreed to consider an alternative course of action for the following year. As far as Congress was concerned, it had brokered a satisfactory resolution for the Jewish community, and had forestalled extensive public discussion. Nothing more was necessary. *Time Magazine* commented at the time that “the situation would have provoked an uproar in the United States, but with typical Canadian restraint, Jewish organizations decided against a public outcry because the Board of Education had acted in good faith.”⁶⁴¹

No doubt, John R. Seeley as the lead author of *Crestwood Heights* also played his part in the effort to keep a lid on ethnic conflict in Forest Hill. Despite his commitment to free discussion in the human relations classes, he was more than ready in his personal and public life to make an exception when it came to Jewish-identity issues. Out of fear for the consequences for his own career he remained silent throughout his life about his Jewish heritage. Similarly, he was complicit in the effort of the elite in Ontario to cover-up Jewish-Gentile tensions in Forest Hill. On the one hand, *Crestwood Heights* for its time may have deserved the applause granted it in the “Introduction” to the book by David Riesman for at least opening up some consideration of Jewish-Gentile relations, which lent legitimacy to such a discussion. On the other hand, Seeley deliberately exaggerated the extent of the cooperative spirit between the two solitudes of Forest Hill in the book. Worse, he avoided even addressing the classroom segregation issue which was perhaps the most serious and revealing episode in the community’s life during the time span of the Project. Perhaps this was the responsible thing to do, assuming that inflaming the issue by too much publicity might have made matters worse for everyone. However, it might also be possible that a price was paid for the burial of issues of anti-semitism at a time when there was such a desperate need to acknowledge and deal with what had happened. Unfortunately, if there was such an opportunity cost, its full weight will forever remain hidden from history because it was an inner kind of suffering. The families of the survivors heard the screams in the middle of the night coming out of their parent’s bedrooms, as the nightmares took them back to Auschwitz, but these fears were snuffed out once the broad daylight returned. Perhaps, it would not have made any difference even if the memories had been dealt with more openly at the time. The tragic reality is that the effects of such trauma may be irreversible.

⁶⁴¹ Martin Sable, ““George Drew and the Rabbi’s”: Religious Education in Ontario’s Public Schools”. *Association for Canadian Jewish Studies*, Vol 6 1998, 36-37.

6. Staff Memos

i) Balinese Treatment

Already by the beginning of the year in 1952 the Home and School Association of Forest Hill Collegiate was planning a thank you gift for John R. Seeley. According to the Minute Book, on January 29th, “Mrs Pearl made the suggestion that the Program Committee set aside a sum of money at the end of the year to help meet the expense of a gift for Dr. Seeley”. This was followed up on March 25th, 1952 with the following entry, which was the last mention of Seeley in the minutes:

It was moved by Mrs McMurdy and seconded by Mrs Salsberg that \$100.00 be set aside as a nucleus for a gift for Mr. John Seeley at the conclusion of the project in Forest Hill. Passed. Mrs MacFarlane moved and it was seconded by Mrs Pape that this amount be put in a separate Seeley gift account and suggested a minimum goal of \$200.00 be set so that the new executive could be guided thereby. Passed.⁶⁴²

The increasing volume and substance of the communication between the writers of *Crestwood Heights* in 1952 in the form of “staff memos”, as Seeley entitled the file in which he preserved this work, also serves as evidence that the Project had begun by this time to shift its focus from research to writing.

A review of the Staff Memos file reveals that the writers of *Crestwood Heights* were initially hoping to say something original about mental health, rather than to provide a compelling ethnographic description of life in the fifties, for which the book eventually became famous. The futility the authors felt about their efforts in this direction was admitted quite openly in *Crestwood Heights*, which the authors introduced as “a species of attempted social therapy”.⁶⁴³ A failed attempt that is, as Seeley states in the final summary chapter entitled “implications”, which is the only place in the book where the question of mental health is directly addressed:

The rather unexpected and perhaps extraordinary spectacle presented by a community such as the one studied calls for a radical reconsideration of the whole enterprise of mental health education. As the body of the study will have abundantly made clear, this community is rich in all the means ordinarily thought of as contributory to mental health...and yet, no forcing of the data, no optimism, no sympathy with aims can lead us to suggest that mental health in the community is sensibly better than elsewhere, or that after all this effort it is being sensibly improved.⁶⁴⁴

⁶⁴² Minute Book of the Home and School Association, January 29, 1952, Forest Hill Collegiate Library

⁶⁴³ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 14.

⁶⁴⁴ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 410.

Seeley speculates that the failure of the mental hygiene movement in Forest Hill to make a difference has to do with the very limits of scientific objectivity when it comes to self-observation. He suggests that theoretical models fail on this account because theorists give in to the temptations of power that the pursuit of knowledge presents to them and set themselves up as a new “priesthood”. While this is no doubt true, and might be taken as another confessional moment on Seeley’s own part, it does not explain what went wrong with the particular theoretical models developed by Seeley and the Forest Hill Village Project Staff. The fact is that, from a review of the Staff Memos written as part of the drafting process for *Crestwood Heights*, we can see that Seeley omitted his and Alex Sim’s most interesting insights from a neo-freudian perspective into what they observed in Forest Hill. Even if these had come to nought in a practical sense, as we shall see, their theoretical interest warranted publication. Indeed, psychoanalysis in general retains its theoretical and cultural interest even though its originally ambitious claims to being a cure for mental illness have been shown to be overstated. So why did Seeley exclude the work of his staff on specifically psychoanalytical field observations? It would appear that the exclusion of the following material shows that just as Seeley participated in the post-war efforts of the hierarchy in the anti-semitic repression of the memory of the Holocaust, he also participated in the cold-war repression of sexuality. It is ironic that Seeley and the psychiatric establishment in the early post-war period achieved legitimacy on the basis of the ostensibly scientific nature of psychoanalysis and yet, contrary to its tenets, they participated in the imposition of a very cold and restrictive sexual regime designed to re-consolidate social stability in the aftermath of a global upheaval.

The repressive orientation of the Forest Hill Village Project’s original aims may be revealed in the eugenicist language in terms of which the early Staff Memos grope toward a mental health focus for the Project. In one undated memo, for example, Seeley tries to identify a general conceptual framework under which the project can proceed in order to “justify in terms of coherence and necessity what might otherwise seem like a hodge-podge of interesting but unrelated activities – a sort of *ominum gatherum* without focus, point or purpose”. Seeley then points out that, “The Study as a whole, operating under and financed by Mental Health Grants, is supposed to concern itself with problems of mental health”. In light of this, Seeley argues, some attempt at a definition of what might be taken as normal in the field of mental health is needed. Seeley then goes on to offer a discussion of the defining characteristics of normality as either, “Perfect according to some ideal standard”, or, “Pertaining to the central values of a homogenous group”. He dismisses the latter definition because homogeneity would by its own definition exclude the possibility of an essential, universal value. His discussion of “an ideal standard”, on the other hand, leads in the direction of eugenics:

It is not unthinkable, and not unlikely, however, at the purely biological level that the species might be well served by the destruction of some of its component biological individuals. Such an orientation is both foreign and repugnant to the main and respectable body of western medicine, but the 1930s demonstrated that some medical men were willing not only to toy with the idea, but to act on it; empty hospital beds in Germany may be testimony to bad medicine; they are certainly eloquent testimony to the non-academic character of those ideal standards which enter into the definition of normal.⁶⁴⁵

This memo does not claim to offer a conclusion but only to open up discussion of psychological normality, yet, as Seeley's reflections continue in following Staff Memos, he seems to assume that there must be some such "ideal standard", however horrible:

In this community what social patterns operate to produce what eufunctions (if one may coin a horrible opposite to the horrible 'dysfunctions' of personality)⁶⁴⁶

The goal of these early reflections was to set up a benchmark against which the progress of the Forest Hill Village Project might be measured in terms of its effect on the mental health of its subjects:

If I may permit myself a crude medical analogy, it might well be that in certain physiological conditions a certain amount of strychnine might well be countervailing as far as the expression of some pathological process was concerned, while it might well be true that in the absence of that pathology, the same amount of strychnine might be highly dysgenic to the organism. To restate that analogy in social psychological terms: it might well be that a given social pattern (which taken by itself would be expected to lead to personality disorganization or social disorganization or both) would serve to offset or countervail the personality disorganization or social disorganization that would be expected as a consequence of the operation of another social pattern.⁶⁴⁷

In a quite-revealing memo to Stokes dated October 17th, 1950 Seeley poses the central question of the Forest Hill Village Project research project in another way:

Assuming a population essentially randomly selected with reference to any biological factors affecting psychopathology, and assuming a group of parents and teachers of that population competent to understand and willing and able to follow your advice, and assuming a desire on your part to maximize the total psychopathology [*sic*] in that population: what advice could you give these people as to the processes they should use and the kind of organization they would need in order to secure that effect? Your advice is to exclude, of course, active biological intervention (eg., decortication, or the giving or withholding of necessary food or drugs), but is to focus on interpersonal and social behaviour. If the distinctions are valid, would you address your advices separately to a) the prevention of personality organization, b) the disruption of personality

⁶⁴⁵ Memo re – Definition of Mental Health, Undated, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁴⁶ Memo re – Definition of Mental Health, Undated, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁴⁷ Memo re – Definition of Mental Health, Undated, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

organization already effected, c) the prevention of reorganization after disruption in whole or in part.⁶⁴⁸

These questions were formulated as if, at first, Seeley expected that it might be possible as a result of the Forest Hill Village Project research to discover a defining quality, or normative standard, for a eugenicist definition of mental-health. Eventually he gave up this quest:

It is still my feeling that we must leave the questions of directly eugenic patterns to an answer by residual category or an answer by indirection, at least until we have more adequate criteria for the definition of social health or mental health.⁶⁴⁹

This conclusion, plucked from the depths of the unpublished version of *Crestwood Heights*, goes some way toward explaining why these issues are not discussed in the final version, and why it turns away from a focus on mental health in favour of ethnography.

Apparently, at the same time that Seeley was in the process of a failed attempt at the philosophical level to define the essence of mental health, he and his research colleagues were also searching on a sociological level for some essential pattern of behavior that might prove to be the fundamental cause of the neurotic behaviors they observed in Forest Hill. What Seeley took to be the crucial dilemma in the life of the Forest Hill Villagers can easily be read as a projection of Seeley's own issues onto the community. He identifies their illness as a consequence of the conflict between what was expected of them and what they were capable of doing. In other words he thought they felt set up by excessively high expectations to try to achieve something impossible resulting in anxiety, and guilt: "It is this juxtaposition of the necessity to perform the act with the impossibility of doing it which, it seems to me, constitutes the crux of the dilemma of these people's lives".⁶⁵⁰

But how did this process of being set up for failure work in the daily lives of the people of Forest Hill? *Crestwood Heights* addresses the pressure to succeed in terms of an inevitably frustrating pattern of "achievement-in-isolation". However, the discussion in *Crestwood Heights* of this phenomenon is focused on progress in school and career. The interesting thing about the unpublished version of *Crestwood Heights* is that it takes this problem of success down to its roots at the interpersonal and sexual levels, which is not done in the published version. The omission of this

⁶⁴⁸ Memo from Seeley to Stokes, October 15, 1950, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁴⁹ Memo from Seeley to Stokes, October 15, 1950, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁵⁰ Memo to The Staff, From John R. Seeley, Nov 5, 1950, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

material, as we have already suggested, may be explained as participation by the authors in the atmosphere of self-censorship that smothered the fifties.

In a most intriguing Staff Memo entitled, "A Note on Interaction Patterns", it would seem that the formulation of Alex Sim's concept of achievement-in-isolation began with speculation on the effects of a strangely abortive interpersonal dynamic frequently observed by the Project Staff. Often, it was observed, adult displays of affection toward their children would be precipitously withdrawn. Sim thought that this was because everyone in the suburbs was short on time – too busy trying to achieve in their school work or careers to allow themselves to enjoy the natural progression of human intimacy. He described it as a struggle over time: "then into the parent's mind enters the demands of the moment. This immediately sets up a tension and a subtle withdrawal from the child as P thinks of phone calls to make, an appointment, or, with the mother, household duties which seem to mount as she thinks of them." The child then seeks to revenge this repetitive early withdrawal of affection by "conscripting the parent" in return "during a telephone conversation, when a man is visiting father, or when mother is preparing dinner". But Sim reaches no conclusion about this phenomenon, except to say that in a more-equal relationship this problem would be less frequent: "It is conceivable that if there was complete equality between a man and a woman, or between homosexuals, this relation would be practiced alternately. If it were practiced alternately in terms of subordination and superordination, in terms of advance and withdrawal, a fair balance might be established"⁶⁵¹

In perhaps their most intriguing collaborative effort entitled, "Balinese Treatment of Children," Seeley picks up on and further develops Sim's sociological insight into the pattern of frustrated intimacy observed in Forest Hill by lending it a Freudian dimension. Seeley addressed his Staff Memo to Sim, and copied it to Loosley and Bell. He introduced the memo in the following way:

You will recall that in a very valuable memo, containing a penetrating insight, you pointed out how frequently parents and others, particularly in the area of erotically tinged relationships, would, for example, pick up a child, cuddle him, arouse him, and set him down before he was satisfied with subsequent conflict over his demands for further gratification. I think this is an observation of profound importance....⁶⁵²

⁶⁵¹ Sim to Forest Hill Village Project Staff, "Memorandum": A Note on Interaction Patterns", July 20, 1951, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁵² John R Seeley, Memo to Forest Hill Village Project Staff, "Balinese Treatment of Children", July 2, 1953, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

First, in his variation on this theme, Seeley makes the observation that, “the cuddling of the child which leads to the sequence you describe, is usually visibly impregnated with and set off by erotic or aggressive impulses, or both”. Seeley suggests that the adult quickly makes a defensive manoeuvre by laying down the child once it becomes apparent by the child’s responsiveness that the adult has transgressed on sexual or aggressive taboos. The following excerpt from this memo suggests that Seeley took this pattern of behavior as illustrative of the Freudian theory of the sexuality of children:

The central act, then, consists in an expression of these forbidden impulses inside an approved act e.g., cuddling the child, but constantly moving towards or felt to tend towards the borderline of propriety, particularly as the child responds to the latent rather than the overt content of the act, for example by becoming visibly erotically aroused. Only then does the hidden meaning of the act become clear to the adult, and does his anxiety about its propriety and about his own otherwise unexplainable abruptness and force provoke him to set down the child, and break off the act.⁶⁵³

This attempt to compensate for their anxiety and guilt by suddenly suspending the erotically arousing play in a “desperate maneuver of disengagement”, according to Seeley, creates a kind of educational blind alley where there should be a more-conscious formulation of learning goals:

...instead of setting a goal in the treatment of children, and steadily moving towards it, any training operation had much more the air of a car proceeding, without any steering mechanism, down a road, bounded by bumpers of various degrees of elasticity, so that he was, in effect, set off in one direction, only to bump into a bumper there, and to be set off in the other direction, in terms, say, of corrective supplied as he showed himself over and under-aggressive, without any possible definition of what appropriately aggressive would be.⁶⁵⁴

The problem then, is that checks on relationships are imposed without any guiding direction, and this is what results in “Riesman’s radar-directed, or other-directed person”, according to Seeley.

The “Balinese” memo is a marquee performance by Seeley in which he merges together his knowledge of various writers in the social sciences including Margaret Mead, Freud and Riesman. The reader may also be tempted to speculate as to whether Seeley’s own personal issues lay behind his interest in the famous openness of Balinese culture toward children’s sexual relations with adults, and his acute perceptions of how these tendencies may have played out at the unconscious level in Forest Hill. Seeley goes further in the, “Balinese Treatment”, memo toward saying something of some depth about mental health in Forest Hill than he does in *Crestwood Heights*. Again, it would seem that Seeley is at his best here when he begins to apply the sociological theory of Riesman to the

⁶⁵³ John R Seeley, Memo to Forest Hill Village Project Staff, “Balinese Treatment of Children” , July 2, 1953, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁵⁴ John R Seeley, Memo to Forest Hill Village Project Staff, “Balinese Treatment of Children” , July 2, 1953, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

field observations in Forest Hill, much as he had done in the early, also unpublished lecture, in regard to the concern with popularity of the students. Yet, as if to conceal his own genius, Seeley chose not to include any reference to the “Balinese Treatment” memo in the published version of *Crestwood Heights*. He explained this decision obliquely in a letter to Alex Sim:

Footnote 5 of Chapter VI on age refers to my memo on the Balinese treatment of children, and I propose to omit this both from the footnote and from the appendix unless you have very strong feelings to the contrary. It is the only staff memo proposed for inclusion and I doubt if it is worth it. We can use the material in some other place at some other time.⁶⁵⁵

“Not worth it”, we might assume, because he sensed that there might also be a political price to pay for its inclusion.

ii) Seeley’s First Draft

In the initial writing stages, Seeley’s attempt to make mental health the thematic focus of *Crestwood Heights* got as far as the writing of a skeletal first draft. What is most striking about this first draft was the emphasis on anxiety not only as the central mental health issue troubling the people of Forest Hill, but also as the very essence of mental illness itself. In his concluding chapter to be entitled “Crestwood Heights and Mental Health”, Seeley planned to announce a theoretical breakthrough in which the problems of mental health could be “reduced to the problem of anxiety”:

For the purpose of the discussion to follow, the problem of mental health is the problem of anxiety – its generation, disposal, structuring, control, and effects.⁶⁵⁶

As we have seen earlier in our review of the Staff Memos, Seeley assigns a “discrepancy between potentiality and achievement” the role of fundamental structural cause of anxiety, and apparently of mental illness in general, in a note he places under the subtitle, “ineffectualness”.

While issues around anxiety and the achievement orientation of Forest Hill culture are dealt with occasionally in *Crestwood Heights*, it does not emerge in any way as a central focus of the book. Again, as we have interpreted the case to be in regard to particular issues like Jewish-Gentile relations and sexuality, it seems likely that the topic of mental illness, even though the original purpose of the study, was deemed to be too sensitive to be dealt with in any depth. Indeed, the issues of race,

⁶⁵⁵ Seeley to Mallinson, August 16th, 1955, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁵⁶ John R. Seeley, “Crestwood Heights and Mental Health”, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

sexuality, and mental illness remain difficult areas of public debate in the 21st century and so it is not surprising that they were subjected to repression in the fifties when social stability was at a premium. This created the paradoxical situation where the government and university invested heavily in the Forest Hill Village Project as a social experiment in the field of mental health, but were unwilling to risk public controversy by publishing the most significant results of the study. Perhaps the governmental interest in saying that something was being done about mental health was one thing, but revealing the actual extent of the problem was another. The other problem with Seeley's psycho-social analysis that militated against public revelation was his conclusion that the mental health services that were supposed to provide a corrective to mass anxiety, were actually found to be part of the problem.

The picture Seeley paints of Forest Hill in what was supposed to be his final summary chapter of *Crestwood Heights*, was that of a community selected on the basis of a particularly anxiety-driven need to succeed. Seeley means by "selection" that the influx "of parent-adults with an unusually high neurosis-prevalence, actual and potential", were "drawn into" Forest Hill by an attraction to this "natural area", as opposed to any kind of forced removal to this place. What attracted them, in the main, was the opportunity to raise their social status above their lower class or lower middle-class origins, particularly by means of public educational opportunities which were reputed to be exceptional in Forest Hill. Indeed, this very social mobility on their part formed the basis for their high levels of anxiety according to Seeley. He discusses mobility at some length in the published version of *Crestwood Heights*, but he chose to omit the full extent of his thoughts about the implications of the selection process on anxiety levels in Forest Hill. In *Crestwood Heights*, Seeley writes that:

People moving rapidly upward economically and socially, specially devoted to the welfare of their children, highly valuing education...are not necessarily or even *prima facie* self-exploitative or neurotic or anxiety-ridden. It is true, however, that many neurotic, self-exploitative, and anxiety-ridden people will share these orientations, and these are not likely to be under-represented in a population selected as is that of Crestwood Heights.⁶⁵⁷

Then, buried in a footnote at the back of the book, Seeley amplified his conclusions about anxiety in Forest Hill, though still in an attenuated form compared to the wording of his first draft. In the "Note" he adds:

⁶⁵⁷ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 359-360.

Obviously, even where there are any underlying neurotic tendencies, they must not have reached the stage of break-throughs into consciousness or of a negative effect on economic productivity. There is considerable warrant though no testable evidence, for believing in the actuality of the logically expected result; many direct confidences reposed in the researchers as to states of emotion; reasonable inferences from observed behavior; the impressions of others; the material secured in the Child Guidance Clinic; and more generally in Human Relations classes with children and informal intercourse with them – all seem to support the view that this community does not manifest a notably low level of anxiety generally or any lack of individuals in whom anxiety is sufficiently concentrated as to be discernible.⁶⁵⁸

This tactic of the burial of key points in the endnotes reflects a very political approach to the text which we might expect from Seeley given his tendencies toward dissimulation, but it may also reflect the extent to which the writing and publication of the text were subjected to significant political pressures from higher-up in the medical hierarchy. It is the same approach, we might recall, that was taken in regard to the issue of anti-semitism where Seeley restricts reference to the classroom segregation issue to a brief comment in the “Notes”. In fact one might infer from these examples that if the reader really wants to know what the findings of the Forest Hill Village Project were, he should skip over the main text of *Crestwood Heights* and focus on a careful reading of the “Notes”.

Now, in the draft of “Crestwood Heights and Mental Health”, Seeley’s original wording was much stronger in terms of asserting that the conclusion of the Forest Hill Village Project research was that anxiety was a mental health issue of general importance in Forest Hill and by implication in the suburbs generally:

It is we believe demonstrable that many neurotic, self-exploitative and anxiety-ridden people will share these orientations and with one restriction will tend to be over-represented in a population selected as is that of *Crestwood Heights*. The restriction has to do with the age and stage of the neurotic or self-exploitive process. It is obvious that any underlying neurotic tendencies must not have reached the stage of breakthrough into consciousness or of negatively affecting economic productivity. In general, this will mean that the movement will occur in the twenties and thirties rather than the forties and fifties.

It remains only to add, perhaps, that what has been described above as the logically expected result on the basis of examining the selective apparatus and the selecting process is confirmed, largely by mere impression, it is true, in the observation of the researchers. The direct confidences reposed in them as to states of emotion, the warranted inferences from observed behavior, the impressions of others, the material gathered in the child guidance clinic, and more generally in human relations classes with children and in informal intercourse with them, all seem to support the view that, in comparison with any other community the researchers have lived in or heard of, this one manifests a particularly high level of anxiety generally, and a particularly high frequency of individuals in whom anxiety is sufficiently concentrated as to be notable.⁶⁵⁹

⁶⁵⁸ Seeley, Sim and Loosley, *Crestwood Heights*, 478-479.

⁶⁵⁹ John R. Seeley, “Crestwood Heights and Mental Health”, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

Obviously, in the published version of *Crestwood Heights* the authors did not want to come right out and say what they really thought about the extent of anxiety in Forest Hill. Indeed, it might have come as quite a bombshell if the published version of *Crestwood Heights* had made the point quite as plainly as Seeley did in his first draft.

There would have been even more controversy if Seeley's arguments in his first draft about the ways in which the community acted to intensify the native anxiety of its members by processes of "deracination" and "concentration" were included in the published version of *Crestwood Heights*. These concepts are largely dropped from the published version of *Crestwood Heights*, but they feature prominently in Seeley's first draft under the subtitle, "Induction of Anxiety in the Crestwood Heights Child". This sub-title, of course, also never made it into the published version of *Crestwood Heights*. Although in Seeley's first draft he chooses to avoid explicit reference to the issue of anti-semitism, the use of the term deracination to describe the effects of cultural assimilation in Forest Hill itself came so close that it was edited out. Seeley defines deracination as the process of uprooting and leaving behind a family's connections to its ancient culture in Europe in the attempt to assimilate to the strange and elusive culture of Forest Hill, Ontario. He writes that:

....the radical character of the deracination establishes a sharp distinction between 'me', and what was once, 'us'. This issued in sharply accentuated feelings of loneliness and isolation.⁶⁶⁰

The loneliness that accompanies processes of deracination as described by Seeley lays the basis for the intensification of anxiety in the émigré to Forest Hill, whom we should recall, was already predisposed culturally and in terms of personality to be anxiety-ridden.

According to Seeley, this tendency toward anxiety neurosis is inevitably brought to the surface by the subsequent of "reinfantilization" of the parent:

The parent becomes dependent, in the same situation as he was as a child in relation to his parents, on the expert as parental figure to guide him in his actions as father or mother of his children, because the connections to grandparent, to church and community is broken for the émigré. This causes recurrence in the adult of the repressed anxieties of the child because of his or her similarly absolute dependence.⁶⁶¹

⁶⁶⁰ John R. Seeley, "Crestwood Heights and Mental Health", Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

⁶⁶¹ John R. Seeley, "Crestwood Heights and Mental Health", Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

Seeley refers to Bruno Bettelheim in relation to the anxiety provoking “totalitarianism” of the new suburban environment in the sense that the parents become dependent on the expert in relation to the most intimate aspects of their lives. Though he qualifies this immediately by saying, “not that Crestwood Heights is in any way totalitarian in reality”. Now, Seeley suggests, the provocation of anxieties in Forest Hill comes full cycle when the anxiety of the parents is felt by the children:

The basic anxiety of the parent and her uncertainty and variability in the management of the child, both from day-to-day or hour-to-hour and from age-period to age-period, tends directly toward the production of an anxiety-ridden child, or, if her defense takes the form of over-indulgence, a more or less impulse ridden one. In the first case, the anxiety of the child felt directly and evidenced in conduct difficulty call out further waves of anxiety and other emotional disturbance and conflict in the parent. In the second case, the impulsive behaviour of the child threatens the parent’s internal and external control-systems, thus reactivating anxiety.⁶⁶²

The parent thus not only experiences a reinfantilizing form of anxiety in relation to the expert but also in relation to his own children.

This is where the term “concentration” emerges in Seeley first draft. The vicious cycles of parent and child anxiety in the upwardly mobile Crestwood Heights type are the effect of what Seeley refers to as a “concentration of anxieties” that has no room for those who might offer a countervailing reality testing function. Everyone is too anxious and feeds off everyone else’s anxiety. Some of the ways that the “concentration of anxieties”, is self-perpetuating, according to Seeley, includes; first, a disengaging movement where “Most of the attempts to encourage the friend in distress to “pull herself together”, or join X denomination, or “let yourself go” or “try to look on the sunny side of life” – attempts which directly deny the advisers’ own experience with anxiety and knowledge about its operation and therapy – are actually attempts to seem helpful without running the risk of involvement. They are at bottom self-protective, and occasionally guilt-charged because vindictive”. Second, Seeley suggests a “magnifying to the advisee the inappropriateness of his reaction” to make oneself feel better, was often observed. Third, Seeley says that the naïve confirmation out of one’s own experience of the reasonableness of what is really a neurotic judgement may often be offered. In general, the social surface of anxiety is a superficially polite society that seeks by this means to contain its own contagion:

⁶⁶² John R. Seeley, “Crestwood Heights and Mental Health”, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

....the side-stepping dance involved in the general ritual of compulsive politeness. The meaning of this general politeness as fear-expression, self-protection, vindictiveness-channel remains to be explored.⁶⁶³

Finally, Seeley introduces a variation on Riesman's concept of the "loneliness of the crowd", in an attempt to summarize the general character of a community that suffers from this kind of "concentration of anxieties". He calls it "isolation-in-interaction":

The Crestwood Heights isolation-in-interaction is in some ways like this (the well know phenomenon of loneliness in a crowd) and in some ways different. The striking difference is that the isolation occurs in relatively small groups which, both on account of their size and their ostensible purpose should represent opportunities for interaction and solidarity of the kind which their members are seeking. Initial, tentative, and frequently abortive moves in this direction are frequently made. At the overt and ostensible level the interaction goes forward extensively, intensively and frequently in an air of palpable excitement – heightened color, brightened eye, awakened body-set, rapid breathing there is even, frequently a heightened pseudo- or quasi-intimacy-bodily contact, caress, the use of endearing or intimate gesture. But the intimacy sought for never quite comes off. The vital issues are lost in the wilds of abstraction or buried under the petals of politeness. Each one realized his aloneness but thinks it a function of his own peculiar nature since all the others 'seem' to be achieving the intimacy and securing the satisfactions desired. The meeting is over and the people involved feel more isolated than ever – each to himself, and each firm in the belief that this is what distinguishes him from the others. There is something like a social equivalent of coitus interruptus.⁶⁶⁴

Isolation-in-interaction patterns are self-reinforcing in the sense that the lonely person is driven further and further back into the private realm to supply the missing sense of connection and intimacy. Yet, this is like falling into a black hole because everyone at home has anxieties of their own. Not only does it lead one to retreat into home life more and more, it also leads to an inner retreat Seeley describes as "self-mining practices which are at the root (or close to the root) of the problem in the first place". Seeley defined "self-mining" as:

The attempts to suggest to oneself, to manipulate oneself, to convince, compel and drive oneself are sensibly accelerated, with an increasing need for and diminishing feeling of potency and control.⁶⁶⁵

At this point in the argument, it seems clear that everything has been very well set-up for the social science experts—that is the psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker or teacher—to appear on the stage to provide the needed reality testing function that might offer a way out of the vicious cycle of anxiety in the suburbs. This conclusion might have been welcomed by Seeley's superiors in the University and the Canadian Mental Health Association but, not being one for such obsequiousness,

⁶⁶³ John R. Seeley, "Crestwood Heights and Mental Health", Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

⁶⁶⁴ John R. Seeley, "Crestwood Heights and Mental Health", Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

⁶⁶⁵ John R. Seeley, "Crestwood Heights and Mental Health", Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

Seeley then plunged the people of Forest Hill to their final doom by suggesting that the expert's own issues with anxiety only serve to add another layer to the whole trap. In a section of his first draft he entitled, "The Institutionalization of the Self – Mining Drives", Seeley argues that the same vicious cycle of selection for, and concentration of, anxiety-ridden persons operates within the psychiatric community.

It would be repetitive of what is already contained within the published version of *Crestwood Heights* to review in any depth Seeley's blistering attack on the psychiatric profession. Suffice it to say that, according to Seeley, the demands of the psychiatric profession selects for those whose excessive work ethic is proof of an anxiety driven need for social transcendence. As in the case of the émigré population who are generally attracted to suburbs like Forest Hill, this profession's anxiety may be rooted in class or personality features but it manifests in an attraction to the position of power the psychiatrist holds as an expert in a field shrouded with an aura of mystery. The whole ritual of psychoanalysis or psychotherapy, according to Seeley, is designed to enhance the mystery of the psychiatrist's presence, for the doctor says nothing about himself and thereby gradually deepens the dependency of the patient who is asked to expose himself completely. The psychiatric practitioner might argue that this aspect of the process of "reinfantilization" which Seeley sees as part of the general tendency toward the "totalitarian" invasion of private space in suburbia is a necessary part of the cure. Seeley portrays it rather as an excuse for the invasion, for the exercise of dominance by the ambitious doctor. While he makes this point quite clearly in the published version of *Crestwood Heights*, he does not use the same vivid Freudian language as he does in the following excerpt from the unpublished version:

What is important then is not the capacity to represent the superego, but the capacity to shake the fundamental elements of the ego-system and of the superego system (of which it is, after all, a specialization) and thus at a profound level to create a condition of dependency very like the infantile state. Not to be noted, the childlike state, in which the existence of a moderately stable ego and superego may be taken for granted. This cuts behind or deeper than that.⁶⁶⁶

In this passage, as well as in many others excerpted from Seeley's first draft there is a much more extensive use made of such Freudian language than in the published version of *Crestwood Heights*. Again, the popular stigmatization of Freud as a sex-obsessed cocaine addict, a phenomenon that Freud presciently anticipated, may have led to the avoidance of such language by Seeley who was concerned not to offend the sensitivities of those in the community about whom they were writing.

⁶⁶⁶ John R. Seeley, "Crestwood Heights and Mental Health", Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

Another reference to Freud that is omitted from the published version of *Crestwood Heights*, but which is most effective, is Seeley's attack on the messianic dimension of the psychiatry:

The expectation is that if one believes in the true message (and its bearers) this will in and of itself achieve certain desired magical results – principally relief from suffering. Thus it might be at a given moment that to accept the Freudian interpretations and their promoters would be regarded as a sufficient condition for escape from the Freud-described hells.⁶⁶⁷

In the foregoing critique of the psychiatric profession, we can see that where Seeley seems to have felt the need to spare the patient from the full extent of his analysis of their anxiety neurosis; he did not feel the same need to protect his colleagues. Perhaps he thought, like a good analyst, that the Villagers were not ready, or that anything too objective might be traumatic for them, but that his colleagues should be able to take it. However, that Seeley saw no need to spare his own peer group, the psychiatric elite with whom he was associated and whom he served, may implicate Seeley's personal tendencies toward self-destruction. Certainly we can again see his tendency not to want to be part of any club that would have him as a member. That is, his fear that he would never be acceptable to any group. Indeed, it is typical for someone who feels this sort of anxiety quite deeply to bring about his own exclusion rather than hope for what in his mind would be some kind of miracle. This was quite understandable in Seeley given his life-long experience of arbitrary exclusion from his family and his heritage. So Seeley bit the hand that fed him, but this does not mean that there was no truth in what he said. It only means that, like so many of us, he was just as willing to use the truth as he was to abuse it if this served his interests. The fact that it was his unconscious interest in self-sabotage that was the motivating factor would not change anything on this count.

Now, to conclude Seeley's analysis of the way that the "institutionalization of the self-mining drives" only serves to reinforce the tendencies towards communal neurosis, rather than to prevent mental illness as was the ostensible purpose of the Forest Hill Village Project, Seeley identifies three major defense mechanisms. Each of these "tend to succeed one another in the neurotic process" of reaction to the invasion of the community by the psychiatrist posing as savior, but really acting as wolf in sheep's clothing. They are the "apathetic, actively-active, and actively-passive operations". They are, as well, omitted from the published version of *Crestwood Heights* probably because they go too far toward an overt criticism of the mental health of the people of Forest Hill.

⁶⁶⁷ John R. Seeley, "Crestwood Heights and Mental Health", Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

According to Seeley, the actively-active, “are those who are handling their anxieties by treating their problems as general and public problems and attempting ostensibly, to secure an appropriate remedy by affecting public policy”. Ironically, “these, the actively-active, are in many cases the most insecure, anxious and maladjusted – not visibly because of the elaboration of the defense-system, but clearly identifiable as such. These people are closest in their beliefs to the mental health experts whom they support enthusiastically (this insight is supported in studies showing that the most maladjusted teachers were those who espoused mental hygiene techniques most enthusiastically). Their purpose in backing mental hygiene principals is to achieve success in self-mining ends”.

The actively-passive, on the other hand, want to be directed and lectured to. They are the professional learners. They have a symbiotic relationship with the actively-active:

For the actively-active the communication system affords two satisfactions: it is itself a vehicle for self-mining and it externalizes and reflects to them their own self-mining requirements. For the actively-passive it also affords two satisfactions: it is a vehicle for the relatively respectable playing out of dependent roles in public, and, as with the actively-active, it reinforces and supports and externalizes the self-mining tendencies to be played out in private.⁶⁶⁸

Finally, the apathetic are psychically paralyzed. The apathetic are for the other two groups, “missionary fodder”. The whole process is driven by their unrealized needs.

He compares the overall-neurotic process in Forest Hill Village to that of the Christian southern states whose missionary goal was to make the slaves content in their slavery. “One children’s discussion class in *Crestwood Heights* took emphatically and for a long time the view that such adaptation (that of the contented slave) was inescapably involved in being a good sport – for those children at that age a general synonym for virtue”. In more formal language he concluded:

When this stage in institutionalization is reached it is possible and easy to hide almost entirely the origins of self-mining tendencies in the separate selves under the mantle of adjustment to social reality and responsible and mature behaviour toward what is obviously the morality of the day. What might have appeared at first as a neurotic self-mining form of behaviour now appears as mature social adjustment.⁶⁶⁹

Thus the outcome of anxiety in the suburbs according to Seeley is like the perfect crime, not the least because it is perpetrated on victims who seem to welcome it. The unpublished version of *Crestwood*

⁶⁶⁸ John R. Seeley, “Crestwood Heights and Mental Health”, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

⁶⁶⁹ John R. Seeley, “Crestwood Heights and Mental Health”, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, Ontario

Heights, without directly mentioning the Holocaust, seems to portray the suburbs as the exact inversion of Auschwitz. Again the slogan is “Arbeit macht frei”, work shall set you free. Self-actualization, or mental health, is defined in career terms yet again the selected population is doomed to a never-ending cycle of fear and medical experimentation. The fate of the victims of suburbia is also portrayed as a kind of inversion of the concentration camp where, in the place of genocide, the population is reduced to the state of zombies whose minds are paralyzed by anxiety and thus go about their business automatically, according to rigid timetables set for them by their psychiatrists. However, Seeley’s analysis did not extend so far as to explain whether the outcome of anxiety was in any way as much by design as it was by a confluence of seemingly accidental forces acting on the post-war social world. By his account it would seem that the latter was the case, but it is tempting to read the eugenicist agenda at the highest levels of the Canadian Mental Health Association into the rationale of the Forest Hill Village Project. This was of course, a continuation of the very same agenda that motivated the Holocaust but by different means. The goal of such a determined effort to induce anxiety into the segment of the population who tended to aspire to break out of their lower class origins (or more to the point, who were ‘deracinated’ Jews) must have been to render them incapable of social or political action. If they could no longer be deported, sterilized or euthanized because the German elite had made the mistake of showing all their cards, then the focus of population control, as Foucault observed, would have to shift from the body to the mind. The Jews would have to be rendered inert, anxious and terrorized.

iii) Seeley, Sim and Loosley

The battle lines were drawn early between Seeley and Sim over editorial policy for the writing phase of the Forest Hill Village Project. The writing phase began in earnest in 1953 – 54 and continued till the publication of the book in the spring of 1956. Loosley was caught in the middle of their masculine struggle for dominance. According to Seeley’s account of the writing phase of the Forest Hill Village Project, because of Sim’s laziness Loosley was working with nothing at the end and was forced to do most of the writing. It was left to Seeley, presumably because she was in over her head, to do all the re-writing and editing himself in order for the book to be salvaged.⁶⁷⁰ Certainly Sim would not have agreed with this version of how events transpired, but even Loosley, the quiet female librarian in the group, might have taken umbrage at Seeley’s presumptuousness.

Elizabeth Loosley, who was referred to by the men as “Betty”, was a very private person who never married. According to an autobiographical family history she wrote entitled, *Memories of the*

⁶⁷⁰ Interviews with John R. Seeley

Loosely's and Magee's: Two Canadian Pioneer Families, her quiet life followed in the way of her ancestors, especially on her mother's side. She describes the Magees as follows:

It was all very Irish; the male dominance; the assumption that the duty of children was to look after the 'old folks' (Grandfather Magee was the only one of Great-Grandfather's five children to marry); the emphasis on thrift and saving; the stern, Protestant ethic of work as a virtue; even the adherence to Methodism; the intense concentration on the family – Aunt Jo once cautioned me, "We keep ourselves to ourselves".⁶⁷¹

Though quiet and reserved, she was unusually independent and well-educated for a woman of her time. She demonstrated this by being counted as among the few women who could say they had served in the Royal Canadian Air Force Woman's Division during World War II. She also revealed herself, like Seeley and Sim, to be somewhat leftist in her political thought:

In my university and early working years, I would try out my newly acquired C.C.F. theories on Cousin Fred. Fred, an unrepentant capitalist, never took me seriously, although he once gave me a tour of Dofasco on a Sunday morning.⁶⁷²

Given this background, Loosley's most revealing comment was made in a letter to Seeley in the final year of their work together. Apparently Dr. Cappon, a member of the Toronto psychoanalytic elite, made a pejorative comment when he heard that she was to follow up her research position with the Forest Hill Village Project Staff by an appointment as Editor of *Food for Thought*, a publication of the Canadian Association for Adult Education. She indicated her outrage to Seeley in the following way:

He must be really mad! But even a psychoanalyst, if he looks around him, must realize that even 'nature' hasn't created every female a dumb blonde!⁶⁷³

Free thinking or not, however, Betty Loosley was not impolitic enough to take sides in the battle between Sim and Seeley, and as a result in my view, she played the role of pawn, or perhaps liaison, in the whole affair. The first shot, it seemed, was taken by Sim who, in a "Note" to the Staff of the Forest Hill Village Project in 1952, outlined a very different approach to the writing of the book than would eventually be agreed to by Seeley as the Director of the Project. Sim wanted himself and Seeley to co-author the book, although Sim does suggest that, "It is my assumption that Jack, as the director and innovator of the project, would appear as the senior author of the book". He proposed

⁶⁷¹ Elizabeth Wyeth Magee Loosley, *Memories of the Loosley's and Magees: Two Canadian Pioneer Families*, Unpublished Memoir, Metropolitan Toronto Public Library

⁶⁷² Elizabeth Wyeth Magee Loosley, *Memories of the Loosley's and Magees: Two Canadian Pioneer Families*, Unpublished Memoir, Metropolitan Toronto Public Library

⁶⁷³ Loosley to Seeley, May 21, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

that he and Seeley would “write the first and last parts. The remaining chapters would be contributed by the project staff”. Sim also suggested that the integration and editing of the whole would be undertaken jointly by himself and Seeley, “The authors will edit the entire work. They will write bridging sections for the Parts II, III and V, and rework the chapters somewhat as Jack and I did Betty’s”.⁶⁷⁴

Seeley, on the other hand, wanted to demote Sim’s role as author by promoting Elizabeth Loosely, “Betty”, to an equal role to that of Sim. Seeley would ensure that he would be remembered as the principal author of the book by having his name listed first. But to the end of his life he sought to undermine the part played by Sim in the Forest Hill Village Project, even though the historical record of Sim’s contributions and the quality of his writing would suggest he deserved better. Indeed, there was more to this rivalry between Seeley and Sim than mere jockeying for position. Where Seeley had been born into a wealthy Jewish family in London England, Sim was born on a farm in rural Ontario in a small town named Holstein. His father was a hard-working, church-going member of this small town. Alex left his father’s farm to pursue his education in sociology in the thirties in Toronto and Michigan, but he never really left farming. Even while he worked on the Forest Hill Village Project his family based themselves on a farm on the outskirts of Toronto. He commuted every day from his farm to work in the suburbs. He could never quite come to accept suburbia as an honest way of life. When he moved on from his job at U of T to pursue a career in the Federal Civil Service, he and his family continued to live on a farm outside of Ottawa. As he put down in handwriting somewhere amongst the many letters and notes archived at the Library of Canada that record his personal experience of the Forest Hill Village Project:

Why did I write my part of the book? Why does a team of three horses plow a furrow? Is it fear of the ‘whip’, encouragement of the master or rest at the end?
Of course, everyone wants to write a book like everyone wants to own a farm, everyone that is who doesn’t already own one....⁶⁷⁵

In fact, in later life, he was so dedicated to his father’s way of life that he wrote a book about him which can be found amongst the Special Collections at the Public Library in Guelph Ontario entitled, *Robert Sim II: His Life and Work, 1876 – 1956*.⁶⁷⁶

⁶⁷⁴ Alexander Sim, Memo to the Forest Hill Village Project Staff, “A Note on Editorial Policy”, September 2nd, 1952, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁷⁵ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 9, Crestwood Heights: Research Interviews Forest Hill Village, MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

⁶⁷⁶ Robert Sim and His Son Robert Alexander Sim, *Robert Sim: His Life and Work 1876 -1956*, published by Sim Post, 55 Sudbury Street, Toronto ON. M6J 3S7, 2002

Nevertheless, despite their differences, Seeley kept in quite close touch with Sim throughout the writing phase of *Crestwood Heights*. He never made a move without consulting him, though he was perfectly willing to dictate to Sim the course that would be taken over the latter's objections. This was the case in regard to authorship as Seeley was quick to correct Sim's proposal in a memo clarifying that he, Sim and Loosley would be listed as the senior authors. In this memo he also outlined the table of contents for the book and the writing process to be followed. The original title of the work as set down in this memo was to be, *Crestwood Heights: A Critical Study*. The shift from the pseudonym "Uppertown" which had been used in Sim's memo's, to *Crestwood Heights* is perhaps worth noting here. Perhaps this was done out of spite toward Sim as well. At this point the authors had planned to have Erich Fromm write the introduction to the work, though in the end it would be David Riesman who would play this role, against the better judgement of Sim as we shall see.

Already, Seeley had arranged that Dr. Stokes would write the preface, which remained the case in the published version. Each author was to write their fair share of the work, it would seem, though the others wrote at greater length than Seeley. Sim was to write Part One of the Book, chapters 2 – 6, pages 26-155 entitled "Structure and Context". Elizabeth Loosely was to write Part Two of the Book, chapters 7-10, pages 159 – 292, entitled "Institution and Function". But Seeley blocked Sim out of any role in the writing of the all-important introductory and concluding parts as he had proposed. He kept the honours to himself. It was also convenient to do this as part of the jockeying over workload. It was Seeley's intention, as always, to minimize his own workload. The research-oriented part of the book was written mainly by Sim and Loosley. Seeley wrote an introductory section to book called "The Stage" p. 3 – 26; and the concluding, Parts Three and Four of the Book, Chapters 11 – 13, pages 343 – 425 entitled "Integration" and "Implications" respectively. These parts of the book could be written based merely on Seeley's own summary reflections on the evidence presented in the rest of the book that was researched, organized and written by Sim and Loosley. Seeley's chapters contain no original research and the best parts of Seeley's reflections, as we saw in the last chapter, were omitted for political reasons.

In order to ensure that he was not left with the bulk of the final editing, Seeley outlines in this memo a writing procedure designed to offload as much of this work as possible. Seeley orders that each author take primary responsibility for their section of the work, but that they all collaborate in the editing of each other's work. Despite Seeley's later claim that it was left to him to do the final work

of integration, the original plan was that this task would be left to Sim and Loosley, “and only if in serious disagreement” would such editorial issues be referred to Seeley, “in an attempt to find common ground”. Just prior to this stage it was hoped that if the work progressed satisfactorily toward a planned deadline of June 1954, then it would also be submitted at that time to “folks in Forest Hill Village” for comment and to “colleagues” in the Department of Psychiatry. The administration of the publication of the work was to be managed by a committee led by Dr. Stokes who was already at this point setting things up with the U of T Press. Originally, an agreement had been reached with the U of C Press to act as the American publishing arm of the project, though in the end it was Basic Books who played this role. By the time when the book was published, Seeley had moved to Indianapolis. Seeley wrote to Sim and Loosley that “my removal to Indianapolis will, I hope delay or complicate things very little”. As it turned out, this was overly optimistic.⁶⁷⁷ As further evidence of Seeley’s low opinion of Sim, and his interest in promoting Loosley, Seeley wrote a letter to Betty on February 5th, 1954 in which he compliments her on being the first to finish her drafts of the sections of the book assigned to her: “so far you are the only member of the team who seems to have turned out anything like what was expected and a great deal more in the time expected”.⁶⁷⁸ The implication here is not only that Sim was considered late in the completion of his material by Seeley, but also that the content of Sim’s work had been found lacking in comparison to that of Loosley. However, this early work by Loosley met with criticism from the leaders of the Forest Hill Schools Board of Education. It was Sim who informed Seeley of these concerns:

Don Graham has chapter X and XI. He and Vern Trott have read them, and they are both considerably disturbed by the chapter on the School....He does not think a fair picture has been presented, but he does not want to influence us unduly to change our findings....I do not think irreparable damage has been done.⁶⁷⁹

The significance of the concern expressed by these school officials is that it indicates the kinds of pressures the writers were under from the very beginning of their efforts.

Seeley, who for better or worse, was always more concerned with politics over content, was quick to write to Don Graham in an attempt to smooth things over. He urged Graham to forward his concerns to Seeley so they could be considered in the final editing of the work. “As you know the materials are still not beyond correction, and I would want the general sense of this chapter and indeed of the whole

⁶⁷⁷ Seeley to Sim and Loosley re: Termination of FHV Project, Dec 18th, 1953, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles California

⁶⁷⁸ Seeley to Loosley, February 5th, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁷⁹ Sim to Seeley, Feb 17th, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

book to be as fair as it can be made". Seeley also tried to explain that the work was meant to be a critical study, "and therefore not to be expected that it would deal with equal weight with favourable and unfavourable aspects of the community studied. The introduction, I think, does make clear that we were problem oriented, that people brought us problem materials, and that therefore the book deals largely with people's problem and less with their successes and happinesses".⁶⁸⁰

Apparently naïve to Seeley's backstabbing, Sim writes to Seeley with typical friendliness, "It was awful nice of you to phone last night" about the positive first reaction from Marsh Jeanneret, head of the U of T press, to the first drafts of the book. However, Sim reveals another side to the issue of outside pressures. Jeanneret seemed to Sim to want to stir public controversy because it would help sales. He reported to Seeley that Jeanneret argued against the use of a pseudonym for Forest Hill, "everyone will know that it is Forest Hill Village and every effort to really disguise this should be discouraged".⁶⁸¹

Since Seeley was out of town, it was left to Sim to handle the politics of publication. He reported to Seeley that Stokes had suggested that he meet with Graham alone to reassure him about the school chapters of the book written by Loosley, and that he had had some success:

I had lunch with him alone (Dr. Stokes idea) rather than with Trott and Betty as was originally planned. He felt much better after – and is coming to see our position much better. I hope and believe he does not feel that the chapter is unduly judgmental. I assured him we all agreed, that you had written 155 comments etc...He has 2 other chapters now. Later when we start revising we'll see if he can contribute substantially to the factual side. I am conferring with Stokes on tactics so you can be sure caution will be the watchword.⁶⁸²

This communication confirms the importance of political caution in the writing of the published version of *Crestwood Heights*. It also provides evidence of the editorial impact of school officials which makes the published version of *Crestwood Heights* appear to be much less of an academic study than it claimed to be.

To his face, Seeley was quite complimentary to Sim in regard to his progress in writing the first drafts of his sections as well as in his handling of the school official's issue:

The progress you are making is simply wonderful....Your handling of Don must have been really remarkable too. I do not believe that you could hope to do as much with Vern, but with Don we

⁶⁸⁰ Seeley to Don Graham, February 24th, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁸¹ Sim to Seeley, March 3, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁸² Sim to Seeley, March 22, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

should be able to reach clarity either in agreement or disagreement on clear issues. I think for his sake and for ours and for that of the volume this is most important.⁶⁸³

It emerges time and again in the letters how Seeley avoids work. The complaint came from Sim that Seeley's comments on his chapters were simply about technical writing points and not about substance. In another letter to Loosley, Seeley basically apologizes for not incorporating her extensive suggestions on his chapter and reverses the onus on to her to do so, although he does it quite apologetically. While it might appear that Seeley was just lazy, or irresponsible, the better explanation would be that he was, as usual, overextended. In addition to his psychoanalysis with Fischer, his new job in Indianapolis and his family of four children, he was trying to write and edit a major book under time pressures. His copping-out is quite understandable from this point of view. As we have seen before he felt a strong need to overextend himself, to be all things to all people:

I am concerned however about a great deal of the thoughtful work you did in looking over the chapter and it is only because I lack the morale to do any further in radical revision that I have not incorporated more of your suggestions. Without wishing to lay any further duty upon you I am taking the liberty of returning your notes herewith in the hope that, if you feel moved to do it, you will look once more at this chapter on Beliefs and incorporate directly in it by footnote or otherwise and add any comments that you feel to be of importance.⁶⁸⁴

By the end of April 1954, Sim and Loosley had themselves begun to look for new jobs. They exchanged letters discussing whether the price for the book should be \$ 8.50 or \$ 5.00. Obviously the pressures on the writers included not only political pressures from school officials but also economic considerations. They needed to finish the book to move on to other jobs and while they were in transition they began to hope for a windfall from the publication of the book. At this time, they were excited to learn that Seeley's friend in high places, David Riesman, had recommended their project to Basic Books, a major American publisher of social science materials including works by Freud, Fromm, and Piaget. Arthur Rosenthal, President of Basic Books, writing to Seeley to express an interest in publishing *Crestwood Heights*, made reference to Riesman's recommendation, "After a discussion of your work, David Riesman said, "This is a book you should go after and one that Basic Books can do the best publishing job on"".

At this point the fact that Sim and Loosley were planning to leave the Department of Psychiatry for other jobs, and that Seeley had been the first to go, alarmed Stokes enough about the progress of the

⁶⁸³ Seeley to Sim, March 25th 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁸⁴ Seeley to Loosley, March 31 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

publication that he became very adamant that Seeley return to Toronto and that the whole group have a meeting. Despite the fact that Seeley was dodging his requests, Stokes wrote to Sim that he felt that such a group meeting was “absolutely essential”. He reinforced the urgency he felt by writing to Seeley personally:

It does seem very important that the research group of the Forest Hill Village Project have a meeting before the personnel dispersment makes the situation even more complicated. The meeting is of particular importance in connection with publication and in connection with content. Whether or not the meeting takes place will depend entirely on your ability to attend. I would sincerely hope that you may do so and invite you to give the matter your fullest consideration as of priority importance.⁶⁸⁵

Stokes obviously had doubts about Seeley’s reliability by this point on such matters. He seemed to have the right instincts here because though by this time in 1954 they were already submitting chapters for review by publishers and school officials, the book would not be completed until two years later. Undoubtedly the dispersal of the staff was an important part of this delay, and Seeley’s “removal to Indianapolis” was proving to be more of an obstacle than he had promised.

Stokes really stressed the importance of completion of the project from the very outset of the meeting, and sought to downplay the importance of obstacles to progress such as criticisms from external readers of the manuscript. The July 2nd 1954 meeting first turned to the criticisms offered by the “University of Chicago Press readers”. According to the meeting-minutes, these criticisms were summed up as, “repetitions, lack of evidential material, and the interweaving of description and interpretation”.⁶⁸⁶ A look at a copy of the “Summary of Reader’s Reports” found amongst the “Seeley Papers” allows us to expand a little on the meaning of these criticisms. The main point of the critique seems to be that the book loses the thread of its central themes because of its wordiness, “one keeps losing the thread and wandering off on the many excellent, and I would grant, relevant tangential associations which the author presents and over elaborates”. According to the Chicago readers, the book is mainly speculative, and intended for a semi-academic audience, “Presumably, from the lack of evidential materials and the general style of writing, the authors are hitting for a much wider market than the academic...My guess is that they might do it, if some of the repetition is taken out”.⁶⁸⁷

⁶⁸⁵ Rosenthal to Seeley, April 29, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁸⁶ Minutes: Forest Hill Village Project Staff Meeting, Thursday, July 1st, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁸⁷ Chicago Readers Report Summary, Undated, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the Chicago readers' reports is that they were most positive about the part of the book written by Alex Sim and most critical about the part of the book written by Seeley. For example, "All readers liked the early chapters and one remarked particularly about the chapter on "'Time'", and, "The beginning chapters are a delight, generally the writing is pretty clear and dynamic". On the other hand, the reports are less sanguine about Seeley's concluding chapter saying, "The last chapter is out of key; it's pretty technical, even jargonesque".

Loosely makes a revealing comment about the pressures of class in Forest Hill in a note on a copy of the Summary of Readers' Reports from the U of C Press, which she forwarded to Seeley in Indianapolis. The Readers report had criticised the manuscript of *Crestwood Heights* for failing to address the issue of juvenile delinquency:

Omissions. Certain omissions were pointed out – in particular the matter of juvenile delinquency. The reader suggested that if this problem did not exist in *Crestwood Heights* the study would lose value to US readers as one of a typical North American Community.⁶⁸⁸

Loosely noted that:

This omission sounds pretty silly to me! After all the whole point of there being "no juvenile delinquency" in the Village is that no one there can afford to recognize that it exists – it's quietly absorbed by the School Counsellors, Clinic, and private psychiatrists!⁶⁸⁹

The question raised by Loosley's comment here is why the people of Forest Hill felt they needed to cover up the reality of juvenile delinquency? Given the general thrust of the analysis in *Crestwood Heights* it might seem that the Village as a whole behaved like the nearby elite private schools. Because of the premium placed on success in suburban culture, Forest Hill was determined to protect its image by avoiding mention when one of their own showed signs of weakness.

Then, the discussion at the meeting turned to the criticisms offered by Mary Doan, a leader of the Forest Hill Collegiate Home and School Association. The minutes suggest sensitivity on her part about the "tone of criticism" the book assumed. Her criticism was therefore very similar to that of the school officials who had read the manuscript. A copy of her letter to Seeley is found amongst his papers that enables us to more fully explore in what way the tone of the manuscript was felt to be

⁶⁸⁸ Chicago Readers Report Summary, Undated, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁸⁹ Chicago Readers Report Summary, Undated, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁸⁹ Sim Memo to the Forest Hill Village Project Staff, 'A Note on Editorial Policy', September 2nd, 1952, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

offensive to the Forest Hill Village elite. It seemed that what offended her the most was the sense that the Forest Hill Village women were pictured as “controlled and duped” by an army of mental health workers who patrolled the halls of the schools and hospitals:

Some of the text impressed me as picturing a community super-saturated with child-rearing experts, if not already in control, rapidly gaining control of duped parents.⁶⁹⁰

Her perspective was that these so called experts were not nearly as knowledgeable as they were portrayed to be in *Crestwood Heights*. Moreover, she argued that the mother’s were far more skillful and knowledgeable in their own right than they were portrayed to be in the book. This was an understandable reaction from a mother in the community.

What is surprising is the vitriol with which she attacked Seeley for misrepresenting his own knowledge of and commitment to child welfare. In a most revealing anecdote she recalls Seeley’s comments on the development of a recreation centre in Forest Hill as particularly incongruous when considered in relation to his advice as a mental health expert:

...you suggested a pageant of the historical evolution of democratic ideals. You also made a remark which horrified me, and which I intended to mention to Carroll later, because I felt sure she would be equally horrified – but which I didn’t. It was to the effect that whatever we decided upon it would have to be bigger and better than any other community could achieve. I considered this a most shocking point of view for a Mental Hygienist to be harbouring! I was also shocked and embarrassed when you asked if our Concert Series was finer and better than anyone else’s....⁶⁹¹

At other places in her letter to Seeley she accuses him of, “an almost hysterical persecution on the part of the writer.....imputing charlatanism to the child rearing experts”. In fact, she suggests that it was Seeley who was himself the charlatan:

As an aside, I am curious to know if you know that your sentence, “It is only when we feel uneasy and feel indeed that something is not quite as it might be that we can sustain the pains that must ensue between the emergence of curiosity and the securing of even a temporary satisfaction to it”, is descriptive of a basic principle central to a local child rearing expert’s concept of security. This is another of the clues that you do not seem to me to be as familiar with child rearing concepts as I thought you would need to be, to make some of the allegations you make. When I read in your text material which I interpret as imputing charlatanism to the child rearing experts, and then I read a letter from you in which you subscribe to a principle long ago incorporated in child rearing material, available both to you and to parents, I am baffled indeed.⁶⁹²

⁶⁹⁰ Mary Doan to Seeley, October 28th, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁹¹ Mary Doan to Seeley, October 28th, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁹² Mary Doan to Seeley, October 28th, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

The local expert whom Doan is referring to here with deference is Dr. Blatz whom she seems to imply was not the imposter she is accusing Seeley of being. Certainly Seeley deserved this attack because of his attempts to skirt his research responsibilities and the particularly disingenuous claim he made to being “Doctor” Seeley. On the other hand, one does sympathize here with Seeley for this lack of appreciation of his talents. This is particularly the case when one knows through a reading of the unpublished version of *Crestwood Heights* of the extent to which Seeley’s best work was omitted from the book, either because of outside pressures, or as an act of self-sabotage.

For his own part, Seeley did not fail to respond to the charges against him. In a return letter he said “...it is no charge at all to say that the authors seem ill at ease in the child-rearing field since this kind of uneasiness is a good beginning point for research into anything”. As to her charge that Seeley launched an almost hysterical attack on other child psychologists like Blatz, he responded:

I do not know whether what you say about me is true or not...but again I feel it would be perilously close to total irrelevancy. The question is not whether all the authors --- let alone one of them --- were inclined to be critical of child psychologists, but whether or not given this initial bias or interest or curiosity they have reported with reasonable fairness what was going on.⁶⁹³

Seeley’s dismissal of Doan’s comments was supported by Dr. Stokes who followed up the discussion of the Chicago Readers and Doan’s comments with an appeal to the group to basically ignore them and focus on finishing the book, always an administrator’s priority:

Dr. Stokes felt that value-judgements could not be cut out of the book at this point, nor could statistical material be included now. He felt that the authors should not give so much consideration to criticism from outside – which had to be expected in any case – but rather to what they wanted to communicate themselves.⁶⁹⁴

Again, as the meeting reached its conclusion Stokes repeated his position that the authors should not concern themselves with the initial criticisms but should focus on the task at hand:

Dr. Stokes emphasized that the general policy for the authors should be to try to produce a book that is satisfactory to them – without too much consideration of what the impact on the community may be, or what the audience might say, or what the publishers may wish.⁶⁹⁵

⁶⁹³ Seeley to Mary Doan, September 23rd, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁹⁴ Minutes: Forest Hill Village Project Staff Meeting, Thursday, July 1st, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁹⁵ Minutes: Forest Hill Village Project Staff Meeting, Thursday, July 1st, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

He even seemed to anticipate that there were simmering tensions within the group of authors, particularly between Seeley and Sim, and so the “Minutes” of the July 1954 “Forest Hill Village Project Staff Meeting” close with a statement of general policy to prevent these tensions interfering with the completion of the book:

It was decided that any disagreement that might arise between the authors ought to be settled in such a way that the completion of the book is not endangered.⁶⁹⁶

Nevertheless, the sensitivity of the authors to the feelings of their audience in Forest Hill was implied in the basic editorial policy they adopted in the meeting which they summed up in three points:

The authors decided to:

- 1) watch carefully any indication of generalities
- 2) remove excessively emotional terms
- 3) try to cut⁶⁹⁷

It is also interesting to observe Seeley’s handwritten notes at this point in the meeting which reveal that the kind of tensions that Stokes’ sensed beneath the surface was real. Seeley’s own handwritten version of the three points of editorial policy demonstrates that the effect of the initial criticisms on the manuscript of *Crestwood Heights* was pressure to whitewash its more provocative content:

- 1) Qualifications on generality
- 2) Too critical in tone
- 3) Write without feeling, write without diagnosis

Above these notes are Seeley’s doodles that could be characterized as taking the form of a hangman’s platform. Just below the notes, numbered one to three, on the margin in small, lightly penciled writing, Seeley scratched:

J. G. – Jack Griffin

Death

What shall we take these notes to mean? We know from the previous study of the confessions of John R. Seeley that he was frequently disturbed by anxiety and by angry thoughts. Perhaps the mix of these feelings might have taken the form of murderous wishes toward Griffin at this point in the

⁶⁹⁶ Minutes: Forest Hill Village Project Staff Meeting, Thursday, July 1st, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁹⁷ Minutes: Forest Hill Village Project Staff Meeting, Thursday, July 1st, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

meeting. Perhaps he blamed Griffin for getting him into this whole mess. In fact, in the very last written record of his confessions to Fischer, Seeley reveals a particular feeling of anger with Griffin:

Dream cut off from National Committee Wednesday morning – Jack Griffin

Nice

Anger with him

Revenge, hurt him⁶⁹⁸

In this context, we may also recall his unwillingness to return to Toronto for this meeting. He may have been feeling anxious and angry throughout the meeting, not only at the criticism indirectly leveled at him for his writing style, his unreliability in terms of deadlines, and perhaps even his having abandoned the project before it was finished. He may have been revisiting his feelings, also confessed to Fischer, that he could not find any way to “disentangle himself from the Project”. He felt trapped and wanted to lash out in self-defense, to punish someone else for what in his mind felt like punishment, even though what was really going on was a plea for his leadership. Perhaps Griffin was a safer target for his aggression than Stokes, who sat right beside him.

Perhaps the group felt they wanted Seeley to stand up to Stokes’s urgent demands that the project be finished and his dismissal of their concerns in regard to the content of what they were writing. Along these lines, Sim wrote in a letter to Seeley after the meeting that he felt that Stokes’ secretary had gone too far in the minutes to play down the importance of their discussion of the concerns of Mary Doan and Don Graham:

I was a little disturbed that Elizabeth’s minutes tried to minimize the seriousness of their comments and the value I feel we all place on them.⁶⁹⁹

Perhaps she had done this at the behest of Stokes who wanted the minutes to reflect his priority on the completion of the *Crestwood Heights* publication, rather than on the content of what it said. Sim’s resentment at the exclusion of the Forest Hill Villager’s reactions may also be read as his frustration at an apparent failure to acknowledge these reviewers clear preference for his writing style over that of Seeley. But Sim himself did not emerge unscathed from these initial reviews of the manuscript. It was suggested at the meeting by Dr. Stokes that another review of the manuscript should be undertaken by someone within the Department of Psychiatry:

Dr. Stokes mentioned that – if the authors felt it desirable - an outside person might be considered for assisting in cutting and editing, and he suggested that Mr. Gordon Watson might be approached,

⁶⁹⁸ Fischer’s Notes, Jan 5th, 1953, Fischer Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁶⁹⁹ Sim to Seeley, July 7th, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

as he would be highly qualified for such work from a professional as well as a literary point of view.⁷⁰⁰

Watson was a criminologist hired into the Department of Psychiatry as part of Stokes' plan to encourage an interdisciplinary approach. Given the fact that he was therefore well known to the authors, his objectivity might be called into question. Perhaps Seeley had sought out Watson as an ally in his campaign against Sim. It may even have been possible that Stokes was uncomfortable with the fact that an underling, like Sim, rather than his chosen one and a member of his administrative hierarchy like Seeley, had received such an overt recognition of his efforts. It would appear that at this stage in the development of the book Stokes had not yet completely lost his faith in Seeley. For example, in a letter written not long after the meeting to Seeley, Stokes offered another compliment along the lines of his "Chestertonian" compliment:

I wanted to thank you again for the stimulating paper at the Congress which has whetted appetite and evoked gustatory enthusiasm. The attached note is but a single instance of a wave spreading out from your central plunging, driving, exploring, pearl-hunting.⁷⁰¹

In any event, whether genuine or politically motivated, Watson mercilessly attacked Sim's part of the book, picking up on the theme that Seeley himself emphasized in his personal interviews with me, namely that Sim was prejudiced against the upper class and city-dwellers like himself and Dr. Stokes:

It is difficult for the reader to doubt that the author intensely dislikes these people about whom he is writing; the tone throughout these chapters is bitter, cynical, and contemptuous. The treatment of the most personal and delicate aspects of these people's lives is quite callous. And the impression on the reader is offensive....

The tone being what it is, one of the most difficult tasks for the reader is to control his own reaction against the author – antagonism, which moves one to doubt the reliability of the presentation.⁷⁰²

Though there was somewhat of a time lag between the receipt of Watson's letter and Sim's reaction, the tension between Sim and Stokes became palpable after this incident. In a letter to Seeley sent early in the following year, Sim reveals his discouragement:

If Watson does not wish to share his notes with the other authors, that is O.K with me, but that his notes are in fact and by agreement confidential is a new situation to me, and is rather surprising since in deference to Dr. Stokes, deference or reticence, it was I who asked him to do this work. But I am not making this an issue because the MSS is now, to me, something between an amputated limb, a

⁷⁰⁰ Minutes: Forest Hill Village Project Staff Meeting, Thursday, July 1st, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷⁰¹ Stokes to Seeley, Sept 14, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷⁰² Gordon Watson to Seeley, November 23rd, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

pair of outmoded shoes, and a child (my own but one of many) who had died of a lingering malady.⁷⁰³

Seeley was quick to jump on Sim's negative sentiments:

I am a little unhappy about your analogies but I am sure I should not interpret them too literally. I would not wish to think of the child I am trying to warm to life at the moment, as being to you something between an amputated limb and a pair of outmoded shoes on a child who had died of a lingering malady. I think it is coming to a happy life.⁷⁰⁴

Meanwhile, Seeley was continuing his campaign against Sim behind his back in letters such as the following to Stokes:

At the moment I am waiting for Betty and Alex's material. As usual Betty has completed hers, but about Alex I am much less certain. As you remember, October 1st was their deadline.⁷⁰⁵

Seeley was clearly attempting to hoist the blame on Sim for the delay in completing the book. Undoubtedly, Sim was having difficulty at this point balancing his new job with the Department of Citizenship and Immigration with the massive project of writing *Crestwood Heights*. Nevertheless, it appears from the correspondence that with a little prodding from Stokes, Sim felt he had finally finished his sections by February of 1955. Seeley as much as admitted this in the following letter to Stokes:

I think most of what we have to get from Alex is clean-up detail, but I will let you know if your helpful prodding should be required.⁷⁰⁶

However, by June of 1955, after a year of pleasant encouragement (perhaps that is how the "pearl-hunting" compliment should be understood) Stokes had begun to sense that Sim was not the real problem, but rather it was Seeley himself who was holding things up. He wrote sternly to Seeley:

We would all wish, I think, to clear up the publication of *Crestwood Heights*. It is now seven years since the project started, one year to get it under way, two years of observation and 3 1/2 years of preparation for publication. You will appreciate that I am under considerable pressure from the funding bodies to report, and the University, from the point of view of contribution to new knowledge, is properly enquiring as to the present position....Chapter eight seems still to be missing.⁷⁰⁷

⁷⁰³ Sim to Seeley, February 4th, 1955, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷⁰⁴ Seeley to Sim, February 16, 1955, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷⁰⁵ Seeley to Stokes, Sept 21, 1954, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷⁰⁶ Seeley to Stokes, June 17th, 1955, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷⁰⁷ Stokes to Seeley, June 17th, 1955, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

Stokes' frustration is understandable given that the group had promised to finish the book by the end of 1954. The fact that the pressures he felt from federal and provincial funding authorities were real is suggested by his persistence on this point even up to the time of publication. As the final copies were being readied for the press Stokes intervened in a handwritten telegram to Seeley to ensure that there was proper acknowledgement in *Crestwood Heights* for the governmental funding that had made the Forest Hill Village Project possible:

Specific acknowledgement of Federal Mental Health Grants and Provincial Support necessary. Trust you are attending to this requirement. Reference in introduction Chapter I does not meet the need.⁷⁰⁸

In this letter Stokes also sets a new expectation that the project be completed by September of 1955. Seeley himself admitted in a return letter that his part at the end of the book was the only thing left to be done, and promised to comply with Stokes deadline of the end of that summer for completion:

All that is missing then at the present time is the final chapter which is half completed and on which I am currently working and which I hope to have finished very shortly – certainly before the Summer is over.⁷⁰⁹

This confident projection of a deadline to be met masked Seeley's inner feelings of terror about his responsibilities for bringing the Forest Hill Village Project to completion. This was revealed much earlier when Seeley confessed to Fischer about how he felt about the finishing work. He likened his anxiety about finishing *Crestwood Heights* to his failure to complete his doctoral thesis:

6:50 – woke up – acutely anxious re – Forest Hill work – Stokes – couldn't finish it – didn't finish thesis...⁷¹⁰

By this point in the writing process, then, the focus had shifted back to Seeley's parts of the book and Sim lost no time in making things more complicated for his rival. From the perspective of a look at his attacks on Seeley's last chapters of the book we might speculate that all of the blame for their fight should not be laid at Seeley's feet. In an early draft of his comments about Seeley's chapters, Sim's major criticism (much like my own feeling about Seeley's writing) was that it was too "abstract and obscure for the average reader, but not systematic or detailed enough to satisfy a critical academic reader":

⁷⁰⁸ Telegram received by Seeley from Stokes, Feb. 20, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷⁰⁹ Seeley to Stokes, June 30th 1955, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷¹⁰ Fischer's Notes, September 15, 1952, Fischer Papers, Forest Hill, ON

I had to re-read some sections to understand what was being said and to see if I agreed in general and to try and remember if what was said had any resemblance to what I had seen in *Crestwood Heights*.⁷¹¹

In fact, Sim claims in his comments that Seeley's chapters were so far from his sense of what he had observed in Forest Hill that he was forced to say to himself that "this must have been what he saw going on, but it wasn't what I (Sim) saw". In general, Sim felt that Seeley's writing was "prophetic and predictive" but strayed from the attempt of the other authors to be descriptive. Again, this kind of writing enabled Seeley to bring his skills in logic to the fore, and let him off the hook in terms of his lack of knowledge of the research. Perhaps of particular interest is Sim's sense that Seeley's attack on the expert as predisposed to the abuse his power, and as a new priesthood, was aimed at his predecessor, Dr. William Blatz:

There is an eloquence and an element of polemics in the chapter which I think is unfair to the partners concerned even for Dr. Blatz who is I feel your principal target, certainly for the more innocent, more naïve accomplices such as Don Graham, Trott, Maltby and perhaps all of us....they are only tending to do what we believe to be potentially exploitive, or even if what they are doing is deliberately evil it is only part of a tendency, not a ripe social abuse.⁷¹²

Perhaps only in hindsight, and in the context of a deeper study of Seeley's own personality, does it become clear that Seeley's attack on the expert was as much aimed at himself, as it was at Blatz or Sim or any of the other experts involved in the Forest Hill Village Project. Nevertheless, Sim's sense that Blatz was perceived as a particularly dangerous rival to Seeley's historical reputation is confirmed in a passage excerpted below from a letter Seeley wrote to David Riesman:

I am not sure how clear the manuscript made it (to you) that all this concern with the "expert" was not primarily in origin or target, in reference to ourselves ie., not a matter of conscience, which came later, but of observation which came first. We were struck, when we came, with the "We brought our Jim up on Billy Blatz's book... even though we felt terrible and it didn't seem to work too well"... type of remark. Later we realized he had predecessors. Only very late did we realize that we had been cast as successors, and only very last of all did it strike me that, in reality, we had courted that casting.⁷¹³

Sim wrote again to Seeley in March of 1955 with another summary of his critical comments on Seeley's work, presumably after having seen Seeley's re-worked version:

⁷¹¹ Sim to Seeley, November, 1955, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷¹² Sim to Seeley, November, 1955, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷¹³ Seeley to Riesman, February 6th, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

I am wondering if Chapter 13 is your last. I am sorry that I have not been able to give you more help with this chapter but, as I recall, my feelings about it fell under two heads: the first had to do with Tone. We have discussed this problem so often I think I need not elaborate on it further. The second heading had to do with the nature of the data and the degree to which we were prepared to project generalizations from it. Since our data was rather meager, I felt that we should suggest our conclusions in as tentative a form as possible and (returning to Tone) they should be stated in as modest and humble a manner as possible. There should not be any judgmental reference anywhere either toward the expert or the parent....⁷¹⁴

In a hand-written note on the draft of chapters 13 and 14, Sim wrote the following comments that are rather revealing of the interpersonal tensions disturbing the working relations amongst the authors:

I am attaching a letter and notes of chapter 13 and 14. You will find that I have been critical of ch. 13. That I am at this late date causes me a good deal of embarrassment. When I first read it I felt 'in my bones' that it was not suitable and that I did not agree with its inclusion in the book, but the balance of relations in the group had reached such a point I did not have the courage, or could not find the means to say so without doing so in an aggressive way, or without doing harm to you. I think I have put my thoughts down now, bluntly perhaps but without the sense that I must summon up all my courage to do so, or that in doing so I was discharging feeling that would relieve me by hurting you. My only uneasiness, and that there is some is manifest by the fact that I have written the covering letter to my other covering letter. The day we had lunch (I apologize for pulling that real estate character into the conversation for I know it was not easy for you) you raised the question very frankly: why was it so difficult for us to write up this material and to operate inter-personally? I think I was evasive at this point ostensibly and practically because it was not the time or place to finish fairly something fairly begun. But also because I think time, in its own good time, will make some parts of the question irrelevant, leaving us with something manageable in our latter wisdom to discuss in a leisurely evening.⁷¹⁵

The conflict between Seeley and Sim continued after the issues around the manuscript itself were left behind, but the focus shifted to the issue of David Riesman's "Introduction" to *Crestwood Heights*.

This issue arose in the context of the new pressures on the authors that came along with the agreement that Basic Books would be the publisher of the book for the American market. Basic Books President Arthur Rosenthal asked the authors to agree to his proposal that David Riesman provide the "Introduction" to the work and that the subtitle be changed from, *A Critical Study* to include the word suburbia. He suggested that alternative subtitles might be, *A Psychological Study of Suburbia*, or *A North American Suburb*. These moves were designed to improve the marketing success of the *Crestwood Heights* in the United States. Eventually, to appease Rosenthal, the subtitle agreed upon was, *A Study of the Culture of Suburban Life*. The question of Riesman's "Introduction" was more difficult to resolve.

⁷¹⁴ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 13, Crestwood Heights: 1955-57, Correspondance and Memoranda MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

⁷¹⁵ Library and Archives Canada, Alexander Sim Fonds, File 13, Crestwood Heights: 1955-957, Correspondance and Memoranda MG30-D260-R2332-0-7-E

Even before Riesman was asked to write the “Introduction” by Rosenthal, Sim had written Seeley that he thought he would be unlikely to write anything as “effusive” as they might like.⁷¹⁶ Seeley himself also anticipated problems if Riesman were to write the “Introduction” but he was willing to go with it anyway because of the optics. As he wrote to Sim in January of 1956:

We are going to have an interesting cognate problem to deal with. Basic Books have asked David Riesman to supply a forward and they have seen it, although I have not. I have, however, talked to Riesman briefly on the telephone about it after it was done. The publishers are willing to accept it even though it may be quite critical and my feeling here is that we, also, ought to accept it sight unseen. I think if it seemed outrageously unfair – though I do not believe that this will be the case – that the most we could do would be to attempt to supply Riesman with whatever explanations might cause him to modify what he had said, but beyond this we should not go, and that having once permitted the publisher to ask him for the foreword we can hardly reject it.⁷¹⁷

Sim disagreed with Seeley about the unconditional acceptance of Riesman’s “Introduction”. Not surprisingly, once he saw the piece, he felt it was useful as a work of academic criticism but too critical to be included as part of the study. In the following excerpt from a letter to Seeley, Sim outlines his objections:

....the suggestions that ‘satire’, ‘waspishness’ and ‘parody’, and ‘sardonic awkwardness’ are present in the material does not sit with the allusion to the writers sensitivity, “did not take exploitation for granted”, the “researchers own niceness”....

If the style was at once deadpan, humourless, waspish, the phrases “not quite jargon, not quite literature”, if there are no models in sociology, but only in literature of a special sort, there is no one more capable than David to sense from the literary style the agony that we severally yielded to first in the daily act of observing, then in attempting to record what we had seen, and also to analyze it. The phrases he uses to describe the work could be applied to an adolescent.⁷¹⁸

Sim was aware of Seeley’s friendship with Riesman:

I of course cannot claim the affection you have for David and because of this affection I hope I have not transgressed.⁷¹⁹

But Sim maintained his stand against the inclusion of the “Introduction”:

If we communicated so badly our real evaluation of the Crestwood adult that we actually thought him stupid but were too nice to say so except by a deadpan tone and gesture, then one who consents to

⁷¹⁶ Sim to Seeley, January 6th, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷¹⁷ Seeley to Sim, January 17th, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷¹⁸ Sim to Seeley, Feb 10th, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷¹⁹ Sim to Seeley, Feb 10th, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

introduce should know the authors well enough to know that despite the tone the authors saw the Crestwood adult as a product if not a victim of personal mobility and rapid social change. I thought this was said over and over again or was it edited out in the cuts?⁷²⁰

Seeley appealed to interpersonal factors to try to get Sim onside with the Riesman “Introduction”, hinting that the harshness of the critique had a “curious motivational history which I cannot go into here”.⁷²¹ In fact, Riesman did avoid Seeley’s invitation to a meeting to discuss the matter and so Seeley was forced to resort to a letter in which, not daring to really ask for any changes, he merely explained his own editorial reasoning in the hope he could get some softening of tone out of Riesman. What is interesting about the following excerpt from Seeley’s appeal to his mentor David Riesman is the ironic reference to underlying cultural differences between the various writers involved. Remember Sim was very much a white-anglo-saxon-protestant and was sensitive to Riesman’s dismissal of his and Loosley’s “waspy tone”. Riesman and Seeley, on the other hand, were Jewish even though Seeley pretended to be a died-in-the-wool Anglican:

I thoroughly agree on the ‘sardonic’ of page 8 and the ‘waspy’ of the prior page. We still don’t know fully why every one of the people who wrote on the project did so, though we were aware of it, and I took an enormous amount of ‘barb’ out. Fred Flemming who wrote much of the material for this camp chapter was waspy as hell, but so were some of the sweet gentle unsophisticated school-teachers who, in the course of their training, wrote one or another research document for us. Why, why, why? First, I thought, my influence. But it occurred in people I hadn’t touched. Later, I concluded it had something to do with the ‘threat’ involved in examining ‘own’ institutions, but I don’t know. Certainly it’s there, and at one time it made me feel the book should be withheld on that account alone.⁷²²

It is note-worthy here that in conversation with Riesman, Seeley claims that it may have been because of him that the book took on such a “waspy” tone. This is as if to say that “they wrote like that and thought like that because, as their leader, my aristocratic English culture had so affected them”. And yet this portrayal comes across as very self-deceptive at the same time because in making this observation he demonstrates his alignment with Jewish sensitivities to the dry and imposing nature of Gentile writing, and the dominant and imposing nature of their institutions. This is proof again of how flagrant Seeley was in his cover-up of his Jewish heritage. It may also be proof that, as a cold war impostor- type, he is here caught playing the role of “double-agent”. At any rate, Seeley’s appeal to Riesman was hardly a request that Riesman omit his demeaning references to “waspyness” as Sim would have liked. Seeley claims the problem was solved by his correspondence with Riesman and that changes were made that should satisfy Sim:

⁷²⁰ Sim to Seeley, Feb 10th, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷²¹ Seeley to Sim, March 19th, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷²² Seeley to Riesman, February 6th, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

In effect, by a few small changes, he has cancelled the feeling of the original – of a critic of hauteur standing above or outside our system – to a feeling of standing beside us in general, though not necessarily on our spot.⁷²³

Now, speaking to Sim, Seeley takes the other side and claims that he and Sim are part of the same “system” and Riesman, as a Jew, is somewhat marginal. Strangely, Riesman’s position as the Jew is portrayed as possibly being “above” the Gentile position. Seeley may have felt this portrayal would appeal to Sim’s rural paranoia about the threat from the stereotypical city-dwelling intellectual Jew. This is Seeley, the chameleon, at his best trying to keep all sides in the conflict “pleased” about the situation. Yet, it would appear Sim was not yet ready to give up the fight to try to get Riesman’s “Introduction” eliminated. Indeed, in the end Sim succeeded in having Riesman’s “Introduction” taken out of the Canadian edition published by the U of T Press. This was because he was present in Toronto when these final decisions were made, and so he made use of his geo-strategic advantage over Seeley on this matter. We might question, at this point, whether in this campaign Sim was acting out his rural anti-Semitism and that it found support at the higher levels of the Gentile dominated U of T? In any event, when it came to the American edition, the situation was reversed and it was Seeley who was able to use his geographical location to his advantage to ensure that the Riesman “Introduction” remained intact. All of this is revealed in the following excerpt from a letter Seeley wrote to Sim in March of 1956:

Your letter on March 12th about the Riesman Introduction is much more difficult. I attempted on the day you mentioned to get a telephone conference between you, Betty, Jeanneret and myself but unfortunately Betty was out of town that day and since the matter had to be pretty well decided, I thought, at the time I spoke to Jeanneret directly and since I knew you were in town in Toronto I asked him to speak to you. It was at this point that I concurred even though I was not wholly convinced of the wisdom of leaving the Riesman Introduction out of the Canadian edition. However, this is settled now.

As to the inclusion of the Riesman Introduction in the American edition, I suppose none of us is perfectly happy. Rosenthal whom I saw last week thinks, I believe, that it will add significantly to sales but is very much concerned about our sensitivities and, in fact, a little over-conscience stricken as to whether or not he made an error of judgement in asking David to do this at all. Curiously enough he originally had Fromm in mind as you will remember I did in the beginning. However, Fromm is notoriously unreliable and it would have been August or September before we got an Introduction out of him.

I do not feel, however, that Riesman’s introduction going in, as far as you are concerned, rests solely on your feeling that you delayed a reply to my letter on this subject. I am sure it is impossible to get any further changes in the Introduction.... Betty, I believe, thinks it is quite a gain for the book as a whole... I should hate to feel, however, that I had coerced your judgement on this, or indeed any

⁷²³ Seeley to Sim, Feb 27, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

other vital point. Unless I hear from you to the contrary, however, I will do nothing further, letting the matter stand as it is essentially between the publisher and Riesman.⁷²⁴

Obviously, Sim never got back to Seeley on this point because the Riesman “Introduction” is found in the Basic Books edition of *Crestwood Heights*.

One might say that it was unfortunate enough that such a squabble emerged amongst the authors over the “Introduction”, but that was not all. In fact, the authors were also quite disappointed in the brevity of Stokes’ preface. In a letter Seeley asked Stokes to expand on the main points of his piece to no avail:

I think your Preface covers the three points that you intended to make in any case – the difficulties, the worthy society, the relationship to mental health – and I am only sorry when I see it that you did not allow yourself considerably more space and latitude to expand on these ideas. They seem to me worth expansion....⁷²⁵

The problem with the “Preface” was that like Riesman, Stokes couldn’t seem to be able to bring himself to be very enthusiastic about *Crestwood Heights*. As Sim so clearly explained in his letters to Seeley this was not exactly what they wanted from those authority figures whose role it was to commend the book and to encourage others to read it. Stokes’ main concern in his “Preface” seems to be to offer an apology for the failings of *Crestwood Heights*. With regard to the questioning of the manuscript for its lack of scientific evidence, Stokes’ apology is something to the effect that the authors were never trying to be scientific anyway:

The social scientist, with his disciplined curiosity represents a sober effort at comprehending the human scene. He may contrive a unique method of exploration or ingeniously devise a new technique of measurement....The present research depends neither on contrivance nor ingenuity, it is basically descriptive.⁷²⁶

With regard to the highly critical tenor of Seeley’s final chapters, Stokes eloquently articulates the importance of such self-criticism as part of a therapeutic process:

The findings include the defect, discerned as potential vulnerability. Such an inclusion by the emphasis given it, might be open to criticism were it not related to the purpose of the inquiry. In any human situation, most favorable as it may be, some breakdown in living occurs. To know the causes

⁷²⁴ Seeley to Sim, March 19th, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷²⁵ Stokes to Seeley, March 19th, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷²⁶ Stokes to Seeley, March 16, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

of personal failure or collapse, attention must be given to the family or social forces that assail the individual.⁷²⁷

Nevertheless, it is clear from his “Preface” what the issues were around which Stokes’ negative assessment of Seeley’s performance had crystallized. Stokes had come to view with concern Seeley’s philosophical rejection of systems of power, which Stokes had dedicated his life to building. He also frowned upon the lack of an empirical basis in Seeley’s writing. For his part, Seeley might very well have come to feel that this need to prove everything was part of the empire-building process itself. Nevertheless, Stokes’ admitted in the letter to Seeley to which he attached a copy of his “Preface”, that he was aware of its limitations. However, he shifted the burden of responsibility for the success of the book onto the shoulders of the authors. His comment introducing the “Preface” was as cryptic as the “Preface” itself. Like a true politician he wanted to hedge his bets on the success of the book by not committing his favour too wildly upon it:

Herewith my effort at a Preface. Whether it should be regarded as a stirrup-cup or a faulty bit of harness will depend on the success of the hunt.⁷²⁸

iv) Vituperation

As it turned out, Stokes was able to claim that the “hunt” had been a success both in terms of the book’s sales record and in terms of the public reaction. He wrote to Seeley congratulating him for the U of T sales record for *Crestwood Heights* being, “a sellout”:

The reception of the book has been associated with much less vituperation than I had supposed. Indeed in my view there is no need whatsoever to be on the defensive regarding it and I would advise still that all the authors and people concerned adhere to the ‘no comment’ principle. I gather the University of Toronto sales record a sell-out.⁷²⁹

Within the first week after publication on May 31st, 1956, the U of T Press had sold over a thousand copies and had ordered a reprinting. Marsh Jeanneret, Director of the U of T Press, also congratulated Seeley and even suggested that he had, “cast a milestone in Canadian publishing history”. He went on in this letter to predict that Seeley “will earn one third of a Governor-General’s Award Medal in due course”.⁷³⁰ Perhaps this was overdoing it a bit, as Seeley was never awarded such a medal, but the publishers’ initial enthusiasm reveals the extent to which the authorities judged

⁷²⁷ Stokes to Seeley, March 16, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷²⁸ Stokes to Seeley, March 16, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷²⁹ Stokes to Seeley, June 7th, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷³⁰ Jeanneret to Seeley, June 8th, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

the book to be a success. U of T Press Field Representative Hilary Marshall added to the aura of success around the publication of the book by pointing out the extensive press coverage the book had received:

Crestwood Heights has so far received a total of 55 feet and 3 inches (in column inches) of free publicity in local papers, which we feel might be a record of one sort or another.⁷³¹

While the publishers were thus ecstatic with the initial popularity of the book, they were less happy with the position taken by Stokes and Seeley against accepting requests for public comment. The opportunity for involvement was ripe at first because the book had begun to cause quite a stir even before the actual publication date set for May 31st, 1956. In a memo to the authors, Hillary Marshall, the field representative for U of T Press wrote:

You will have heard of, or seen, the stories that were published starting on May 2nd. While distorted they have undoubtedly caused a considerable degree of interest in the book, and there has been almost continuous comment since.⁷³²

Marshall added that the U of T Press had already intervened in the initial public discussion of the book:

When the newspaper stories broke, the CBC news round-up programme carried interviews with various villagers. Miss Halpenny broadcast a very short factual account of the book to set the record straight.⁷³³

To substantiate Marshall's claims we can refer to an article written by Rabbi Slonim, a staff writer for the *Toronto Telegram*, entitled, "Forest Hill Village on Analyst's Couch". Slonim reported that in the weeks prior to publication there had been much "discussion based on hearsay that has agitated the community and twisted the book's meaning out of all proportion". According to Slonim, there were excerpts from the book released prior to publication that were taken out of context and, "some of the Village residents became angry, others fearful, and still others, in an attempt to shake off the stigma of being guinea pigs, have taken the positions of one woman who was heard to remark in a Forest Hill bake shop, "They don't mean me"".⁷³⁴ Given the fact that Slonim was a rabbi, and given that the

⁷³¹ Hillary Marshall, Field Representative for UT Press to The Editor of Publishers Weekly, June 19, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷³² Hillary Marshall, Field Representative for UT Press to Seeley, May 16, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷³³ Hillary Marshall, Field Representative for UT Press to Seeley, May 16, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷³⁴ Rabbi Slonim, "Forest Hill Village on Analyst's Couch", *Toronto Telegram*, May 26th 1956

focus of public concern was the “stigma of being guinea pigs” we might easily suspect that much of the public controversy emanated, understandably, from the Jewish population. Indeed, Marshall acknowledged this in his memo to Seeley:

...it appears that Jewish tempers are unduly ruffled in the Village by a book they haven't read, and this despite the fact that Rabbi Feinberg preached what appears to have been a first class sermon on the book in which he described it as “earnest, consecrated and uncompromisingly honest”.⁷³⁵

In a handwritten note reacting to Marshall's report, Seeley asked incredulously, “Why Jewish opinion, why is explanation of the Book needed”? Given his general policy of avoidance in regard to Jewish issues, it may be understandable that Seeley was caught by surprise on this. Apparently, he was not the only one. There is no clue in the *Toronto Star* coverage of *Crestwood Heights* as to whether in fact it was mainly the Jewish community that reacted strongly to the news of the upcoming publication of the book, nor is there any indication of the nature of the concerns.

The newspaper stories about the upcoming publication of *Crestwood Heights* referred to by Marshall and Slonim that had got the whole commotion started were on the front page of the *Toronto Daily Star*, on May 3rd, 1956. Sprawled in big black lettering was the title, ““Find Mental Problems Prevalent in New Suburban Areas: Forest Hill Mothers are Indignant over “Crestwood Heights””, A Book which Blasts Way They Raise Their Children”.⁷³⁶ The stories claimed that parents in Forest Hill were alarmed that the study revealed “an estimated 5% of Forest Hill's 2,000 school children were in need of clinical aid for acute mental disturbances and that 20 percent required individual treatment of some kind”. In addition, the newspaper emphasized rhetorical comments made in the book such as the one describing Forest Hill mansions as “looking like department stores and appearing rather cold and lacking in life”. Much to the chagrin of the mothers interviewed, the paper also highlighted the book's observation, with a distinct note of irony that children were typically not allowed to play in the living rooms of Forest Hill. Yet, to further foment controversy, the photographs splashed across the front page as illustrations pictured young mothers, with cat's eye glasses and curls, seemingly encouraging their children to romp with dolls and rocking horses in the living room. Mothers are quoted in the article as objecting to the study by saying, “the only thing wrong with my children is that they're too normal”, even though by saying this they really only confirmed its findings. Even School Board officials are caught expressing concern about the book

⁷³⁵ Hillary Marshall, Field Representative for UT Press to Seeley, May 16, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷³⁶ ““Find Mental Problems Prevalent in New Suburban Areas: Forest Hill Mothers are Indignant over “Crestwood Heights”: A Book which Blasts Way They Raise Their Children”, *Toronto Daily Star*, Thursday, May 3rd, 1956 Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

because the book had been displayed at the American Psychiatric Association Convention in Chicago before any of them had seen a copy. The School Board officials backtracked somewhat with the claim that any concerns about *Crestwood Heights* were offset by the positive benefits to the community that had accrued from the Forest Hill Village Project over the previous five years.

The publishers informed Seeley and the other authors about the controversy that the publication was causing in the local press in Toronto. In addition, Marshall wrote especially to Seeley on May 15th urgently requesting that Seeley make himself available for public comment around the date of publication:

I am writing to you particularly as I wonder whether there is any chance of your being in Toronto anywhere between May 30th and June 2nd. We could give the book a tremendous start with a TV and/or radio interview. We must (and will) get it moving fast before people start away to their cottages and summer camps.⁷³⁷

In red ink Seeley wrote in the margin of Marshall's letter – "NO!" Since Seeley did not respond immediately, Marshall wrote again on May 16th in an attempt to convince him to come to Toronto:

I have just finished talking to Ross McLean, the CBC producer of *Tabloid* – an extremely popular Television program. He is very anxious indeed to have you appear on his programme on Wednesday May 30th, and you can imagine what terrific publicity this could be for *Crestwood Heights*. Besides this, of course, the newspapers (*Star* in particular) would like to interview you, and it could well be that the Press would arrange other entertainments (?) for you!⁷³⁸

Now, it may be understandable that Stokes would be against such additional publicity given that he could already claim victory to his superiors without risking any unnecessary public disorder which is always unpopular in governmental circles. It is more difficult to understand why Seeley avoided jumping into the fray. After all, he had both a long-term professional interest in the book's success and also a more immediate pecuniary interest. Nevertheless, in a letter he wrote to Sim on this matter, Seeley explained why he did not want to get involved in the media campaign:

...will you let me know what your own posture and attitude will be towards the inquiries and demands for explanation and defense that will doubtless begin to flow in as soon as the book is out? My own attitude, since I am now deeply involved in other matters, since the work was done a long time ago, and since I have neither time nor desire to get drawn into a whole lot of new enterprises on

⁷³⁷ Hillary Marshall to Seeley, May 15, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷³⁸ Marshall to Seeley, May 16th, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

its account will be “no comment”. I think this attitude would serve us best severally and jointly but would be glad to have an expression of your views on it”.⁷³⁹

Sim wrote back to Seeley that he was “rather disturbed that you will not be available for defense and indeed of the last section”. However, he would have to abide by the “no comment” position himself, in any case, because, “my present position as a civil servant will preclude participation in controversy”.⁷⁴⁰ This was a convenient way to opt out.

Apparently, Seeley was not quite clear about his own position when the initial furor around the *Toronto Star* coverage broke out on May 3rd, 1956. He decided at first to write a short letter to the *Star* attempting to diffuse the tensions, if not by way of an apology to the people of Forest Hill with whom he had worked:

For the sake of countless of our friends in *Crestwood Heights* and for the sake of objectivity and justice please note that the authors nowhere state Crestwood children are spoiled nor that Crestwood homes are generally cold. They do not regard the forthcoming book as a blast or an unflattering portrait nor do they imply Crestwood is different from many other communities and criticism based on the contrary assumption is already more than a little off the beam. Let the book speak for itself when published and let the good people of a good community then assess its intent, justice and relevance.⁷⁴¹

Upon receipt of the requests for further comment from Marshal and for public appearances on television and radio, Seeley solidified his decision not to become involved in the media campaign. First he confirmed the “no comment” policy that he and Sim had already agreed on with Elizabeth Loosely. Her instincts, both as a librarian and as a woman of her time, were certainly not to seek out the limelight. She wrote to Seeley about how she had been hounded by the local press:

He asked me if I’d ever run into any hostility while interviewing and I said I couldn’t honestly say that I had – we’d all had unusual cooperation and intelligent understanding of what we were doing. I mentioned the seminar group where the research process had been explained and....that the study was as serious and conscientious as we could make it and that I wasn’t interested in the sensational repercussions.⁷⁴²

Then Seeley wrote back to Marshal on May 18th, confirming that the authors had all agreed to adhere to a no comment policy:

⁷³⁹ Seeley to Sim, November 4th, 1955, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷⁴⁰ Sim to Seeley, November 21, 1955, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷⁴¹ Seeley to the Editor of the *Toronto Daily Star*, May 8th, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷⁴² Loosely to Seeley, May 4, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

I can fully see the advantage of moving with, if not heightening the tide of publicity which you have – if I may mix the metaphor – set into flow or helped. On the other side, I think there are at least five weighty reasons why the authors would not wish to be involved even if that involvement should be financially or otherwise to their benefit.⁷⁴³

Seeley went on in the letter to explain that the authors felt that it would be inconsistent with the book's outlook if they, as experts, spoke directly to the public rather than restrict themselves to more scholarly discussion amongst their peers. Seeley also pointed out that the authors agreed on a “no comment” approach in order to handle potential differences between them and to avoid over-commitment. Finally, Seeley added that:

I should say for myself that such spontaneous or impromptu appearances as are involved, say in a press conference or a TV or radio interview, are not the kind of thing I do well or with comfort and I should rather wish to avoid that kind of involvement.⁷⁴⁴

This final point is surprising because one might think that Seeley's outstanding verbal facility, and his ability to roll out a speech or policy off the top of his head, would incline him to welcome such opportunities for public dialogue. On the other hand, in his private letters to Martin Fischer he had indicated that he was feeling particularly anxious at that time in his life as an exile in Indianapolis. This may have been linked to his separation from his special friend, and also to his feelings of being somewhat estranged from his former colleagues in Toronto. In this interpersonal context, Seeley may have dreaded a return to Toronto. He may also have feared that his general state of anxiety would have been aggravated by the performance pressures of appearing on television and radio.

Instead, Seeley decided it was safe to respond to the controversy in writing, so he informed Marshall that he would write a comment as part of the series of articles to be written in the *Toronto Star* about *Crestwood Heights*:

Despite all of this I should inform you that a Mr. Johnson from the *Toronto Star* telephoned yesterday, stating that he was intending to do a series of four articles which would essentially restate parts of what was said in the book and asking whether I would write the fifth article of the series....I told him that one of us would be willing to write about 500 or 800 words of comment.⁷⁴⁵

Of the many defensive remarks Seeley made in his later, lengthier, letter in response to the *Star*'s coverage, the most interesting were twofold. First, Seeley wanted to address the claim that *Crestwood Heights* had argued that the schools were “dangerously dominating” Forest Hill Village.

⁷⁴³ Seeley to Marshall, May 18th, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷⁴⁴ Seeley to Marshall, May 18th, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷⁴⁵ Marshall to Seeley, May 18, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

As we have already seen, Seeley, Sim and Loosley were very concerned about the objections to the manuscript that had been raised by Don Graham and other Forest Hill Schools officials. Seeley sought to clarify that *Crestwood Heights* had merely put forward the view that schools were assuming more social functions and that they might be in danger of getting beyond democratic control. Moreover, rather than suggesting schools were becoming oppressive institutions, the authors had developed great respect for the teachers and school administrators they had worked with:

....we respected the men and women and students in them. If they needed any further tribute they paid it to themselves when they permitted us to study them in the cold white light of detachment.⁷⁴⁶

As a second major response, Seeley wrote that the main point of the book was for experts to be more straightforward with laypersons. This aim was not helped, Seeley wrote, by journalistic attacks which only feed expert anxieties about whether they are understood, and may only serve to force them into more cryptic messages. In closing his letter, Seeley seemed to conjure an image of himself as just such an expert, who chose to descend from the cold white light of Platonic detachment into the cave of daily debate and political struggle very reluctantly, “I join only most reluctantly, feeling virtually coerced”.⁷⁴⁷

It is true, Seeley was only too happy to be able to finally “disentangle” himself from the Forest Hill Village Project. He certainly wasn’t encouraged to continue the battle by Stokes, who rewarded him for the successful completion of the project, albeit somewhat belated, with a “contingent” and part-time position back in Toronto with the Department of Psychiatry:

....You will know how much your colleagues here would welcome you back into a fellowship of good thinking and good doing.

I just wanted you to know that if the post appeals to you, and it certainly has tremendous opportunities and very worthwhile relationships, a contingent appointment with the Department of Psychiatry as Associate would be definitely arranged.⁷⁴⁸

Seeley took this option, which allowed him to return from exile in the United States with some honor, as he explains in a rather cordial letter to Sim:

The rumors you hear are correct. After looking at umpteen jobs – some with a great deal of money but very little scientific interest attached and some with a lot of scientific interest but not a very great deal of money – I decided chiefly, I believe, on sentimental grounds that the overriding consideration

⁷⁴⁶ Seeley to the Editor of the *Toronto Star*, June, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷⁴⁷ Seeley to the Editor of the *Toronto Star*, June, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷⁴⁸ Stokes to Seeley, July 25th, 1956, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

would be to take a job that would bring me back to Canada. At least three were offered but in terms of what I wanted I chose the one at the Alcoholic Research Foundation at Ontario together with a return as an Associate in the Department of Psychiatry, but without any onerous duties....⁷⁴⁹

What Seeley portrayed in public, as we know, was quite different from what he felt in private. The bravado he put on in this letter about his return from exile in Indianapolis masked his real feelings. These are revealed in a letter he wrote to Martin Fischer at the time:

I dreaded coming back to Canada in August. But I talked to Don Graham Monday night – and everything seemed most cordial – and then Stokes just a few minutes ago – and he invited me to stay with them if I came up for a conference about the book in June. So where are my ghosts? I anticipated that neither would willingly speak to me – and felt accordingly.⁷⁵⁰

We can only speculate about why Seeley felt such dread about his return. Perhaps he felt that his former colleagues would harbor animosity over his precipitous flight to Indianapolis and the resultant delay in the final completion of *Crestwood Heights*. Perhaps he feared that the conflicts that had surfaced around the time of the publication of *Crestwood Heights* with men like Donald Graham might come back to haunt him? We must not forget that according to Dr. Reva Gerstein, who replaced Seeley at the Canadian Mental Health Association, his name was unmentionable amongst the senior staff of the group who had been responsible for launching his career. Obviously, he might not have met with such a friendly reception from Jack Griffin or Clare Hincks if he had bumped into them upon his return. As to Stokes, while Seeley may have managed to maintain relations, he would never be invited to return to work full-time at the U of T Department of Psychiatry. As we have already seen, his position had by this time been filled by Dr. Thomas Mallinson, who had once been Seeley's protégé. Stokes was an understanding psychiatrist and an adroit politician; his courtesy toward Seeley was likely quite superficial and designed to cover up his deep feelings of disappointment in the man in whom he had once placed very high hopes. Lastly, we should not forget that Seeley would also have to resume his complicated relationship with Martin Fischer.

Despite having burned many bridges in the process of building his "empire" with the Department of Psychiatry, there was still one option open to Seeley which held promise. Already in the spring of 1956 as he was wrestling with the final stages of the Forest Hill Village Project, Seeley wrote to his original mentor, Dr. Murray Ross. We might recall that it had been Ross who had picked Seeley out from amongst the crowd of other orphans at the YMCA in the early days of the Depression. Seeley

⁷⁴⁹ Seeley to Sim, July 20, 1957, Seeley Papers, Los Angeles, California

⁷⁵⁰ Fischer's Notes, undated, Fischer's Papers, Los Angeles, California

wrote to Ross who was by then head of the School of Social Work at U of T, hoping to be offered a full-time position that would ostensibly enable him to write the book on the human relations classes that he and Mallinson had often discussed. Whether Seeley would have ever followed through on this “unfinished task”, as he referred to it in the letter to Ross, is somewhat doubtful given his record when it came to the prioritization of research and writing projects. Political games seemed to hold his attention more fixedly, even though he met with as much failure as success in their pursuit. Nevertheless, we might benefit at this point from a look at what Seeley should have done, as he explained it to Ross, if only because it serves as an excellent summary of the highest, though largely unrecognized, accomplishment of the Forest Hill Village Project, when all is said and done:

I am left, now, with three unfinished tasks, the completion of which I judge to be of some importance. In the course of the Forest Hill Village Project we conducted, as you know, a study within a study: actually a study in education or preventive psychiatry. Under stringent scientific controls we set up in the suburban school system a series of free discussion groups with normal children. Our leading hypothesis was that children exposed to such an experience would differ from matched children not so exposed, in a statistically significant way – and in the direction of better mental health or attitude improvement. Our data not only demonstrate that such is the case, but that differential gains in school-performance were shown by the experimental children as well. These findings are of considerable significance both to educators and psychiatrists.

A Ph. D. thesis representing the bare bones of this experiment won high praise and is already on file with the University of Toronto, Department of Psychology. Everyone who has seen or heard of the material wants to see it turned into a book, and it would lack neither for audiences nor publisher. This is the first unfinished task...⁷⁵¹

⁷⁵¹ Seeley to Murray Ross, April 20, 1956, Clara Thomas Archives and Special Collections, York University, John R Seeley Papers, 1954-1971, F0405

Conclusion:

The Seeley Question

Will no one rid me of this turbulent priest?

Henry II

As a mental health initiative in Ontario's schools during the 1950s, the Forest Hill Village Project grappled with many of the issues that are once again in play in this problematic area of public policy. It is remarkable that current mental health initiatives in our schools are still seeking to reduce stigma, train teachers and build institutional networks between mental health and educational professionals, as if work in this area had not already begun a century ago. On the one hand, this demonstrates the far-sightedness of Seeley's vision of mental health policy. On the other hand, it is an indictment not only of the failure of the mental health movement to implement the policy, but also of our collective failure to pay attention to our history.

The first thing to be considered with regard to the current resurgence of interest in mental health as a public issue is the very fact that this is not news. The history of the Forest Hill Village Project would suggest that mental health has come into public view before in times of social unrest. Indeed, in the adjustment periods after each of the world wars of the twentieth century the state and its allies were ready to commit significant resources to mental health programs like the Forest Hill Village Project. We should remind ourselves at this point that the Forest Hill Village Project was only one of many thought control experiments funded by the Canadian government in the early post-World War II period. Seeley's psychoanalytic pedagogy stands uncomfortably alongside Cameron's CIA inspired "psychic driving" experiments and Hoffer's "mind-manifesting" use of LSD in the annals of Canadian social psychiatry during the 1950s. Again, in our own historical period, as revolutionary unrest spreads around the world in response to the economic crisis of the early 21st-century we are suddenly witnessing renewed interest in the mental health field. The question is whether this apparent pattern of increased governmental activity in the field of mental health during times of social transition is mere coincidence, an expression of a genuine concern to alleviate societal stress, or whether, in difficult times, mental health too easily becomes a euphemism for crowd control. In other words, has the discourse of mental health, in addition to its implications for the individual patient, also become symbolic of the state of tension in the body politic as a whole?

The association between mental health and eugenics in Ontario's history is not reassuring in this regard. Eugenics, generally speaking, is social control by hierarchical methods of ranking taken to the extreme of the biological manipulation of the population. Its continuing effects, despite the fact that the explicit pursuit of eugenicist measures was dropped after the second-world-war, may be suspected from the fact that it was the very same people and organizations who had led the eugenics movements prior the war who were out front in the campaign for the mental health movement in the post-war era. Here we must point out with particular concern the important role played by the Canadian military in the Forest Hill Village Project. We have seen that Seeley and his superiors in the Canadian Mental Health Association (like Griffin and Line) had all begun their collaboration as leaders of the Personnel Directorate of the Canadian Armed Forces during World War Two. Indeed, they boasted of how they had conceived of the mental health project in the schools as the continuation by other means of the military personnel policy they had devised during the war. This concern in regard to the potential connections to wartime eugenics is further deepened by the fact that the Forest Hill Village Project was conducted in a Jewish community with a large population of Holocaust survivors.

The continuity with the pre-war eugenics movement may also be detectable in the way that mental health was so easily redefined after the war so as to have the same social function. The only difference was that the basis for social ranking and exclusion shifted from racial to health grounds. Notice that the term health was subtly redefined in ways that could readily be translated into another system of ranking based on levels of intelligence, social conformity, efficiency and productivity. In effect, the same eugenicist population-control goals were to be pursued, but the newspeak by which these goals were re-defined put the intent in socially acceptable terms according to the prevailing culture of high expectations. Of course, we all know that this means that those who cannot measure up to such norms are marginalized. They are forced into testing processes where their deficiencies can be publicly identified. They are humiliated by forced applause, rather than by forced removal.

Another cause for concern in regard to the underlying motivations behind current mental health initiatives based on the history of the Forest Hill Village Project might be the character-type of those who tend to rise to become part the medical elite. Despite the apparent altruism of their mission, governmental ministries of health and education are dominated by the kinds of massive state and corporate hierarchies that have rewarded aggression and skill in the manipulation of power since the time of Machiavelli. Men of cunning, like Seeley, have always tended to succeed in such a setting. Yet, the primary concern is not that Seeley, and other people like him (for women of this type as well

are increasingly drawn into these hierarchies) are political animals, but rather, what it was that made them that way. In Seeley's case when we realize what inner darkness drove him from one battle to the next we are frightened to think what could have happened. As Dr. Reva Gerstein put it, "there was something destructive about him".⁷⁵²

Now, Clayton Ruby suggested to me that Seeley was not interested in politics and this would be true if he were taken to mean involvement in elections, political parties or foreign policy. It also might ring true if he were referring to the anarchist strand in Seeley's thought which began to crystallize in the aftermath of the Forest Hill Village Project. Indeed, when his next major educational project also foundered upon the rocks of high politics in Ontario, Seeley became much more overtly anti-political. The educational project being spoken of here is the founding of York University. As it turned out, Seeley's overture to his friend Murray Ross upon his return to Toronto in 1956 was amply rewarded. By 1959, Ross had invited Seeley to continue his quest for a psychoanalytically enlightened education by playing a lead role in the development of a faculty and a curriculum for the new university.

It is important to contemplate the extent to which Seeley was originally dedicated to the ideal of York as a small tutorial based university like Oxford and Cambridge. Seeley liked to say that there was a running joke amongst the staff at York in the early days that if a professor was "caught with more than one student in his class he would be fired".⁷⁵³ He had managed to convince his friend and superior, Dr. Murray Ross of this vision at least in the early days. Before long, however, population pressures resulted in increasing demand for university spots in Metropolitan Toronto and Ross was forced to abandon the small liberal arts university ideal. For Seeley this ideal was so intimately connected to the educational philosophy he had already begun to devise and advance during the Forest Hill Village Project that he could not accept political compromises on its integrity. He was enraged by Ross's willingness to stray from the script he had written for him in his inaugural vows as President of York University and in the early policy documents Seeley drafted on the developing curriculum of the new university. Within three years of the founding of York Seeley led a group of dissident professors who charged Ross with an undemocratic governing style and with the betrayal of the university's founding mission. He was, as a result, forced to resign in a public scandal that made his last difficult days with the Department of Psychiatry look like child's play.

⁷⁵² Interview with Reva Gerstein, 20 August 2008

⁷⁵³ Interviews with John R. Seeley

In fact, Seeley would never return to work in Canada again. Seeley fled to the United States where he first took up a position at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. When Seeley crossed Ross, it was the last straw. Ross is reputed to have threatened that if Seeley persisted in the campaign against Ross's leadership at York, he would never work in Canada again. As it turned out, Ross made good on his threat.

A decade later, "The Seeley Question", as it was referred to in the title of an editorial in the *Globe and Mail*, was once again in the Toronto papers. A job offer for Seeley with the Sociology of Education Department at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) had been over-turned at the highest levels of the Ontario government. The editorial raised the question as to the propriety of the intervention by the Minister of Education in the OISE selection process which had led to the decision not to hire Seeley. Indeed, the Minister did acknowledge in the Legislature that he had passed on negative information about Seeley to the Director of OISE which he had received from senior and respected educators in the province. Naturally, he refused to reveal who the sources were or what they said. Undoubtedly, one of them was Murray Ross. What was said, however, has never been revealed.

In real historical terms, the "Seeley Question" amounted to whether his rejection by the powers-that-be in Ontario was based on vindictiveness, if not fear, in regard to his anti-politics, or whether there was something more troubling involved. His son was reported as having said in the lengthy obituary written about Seeley in the *Globe and Mail*, that he was just too "hot" for the Ontario old boy's network to handle:

Prof. Seeley yearned to return to Canada, especially Toronto, but his dissident political activity and fractious reputation apparently mitigated against formal invitations. He was a "lightening rod", said Ron Seeley. "He was just too hot for many people in staid institutions to handle".⁷⁵⁴

Indeed, after his rejection from York University, Seeley's activism had become quite radical. At the time of his resignation from York, Seeley wrote a letter to the editor of the *Globe and Mail* in which he made a statement about what he called the "crisis in Canadian universities" that places his thinking at that time already squarely within Christian anarchist traditions:

⁷⁵⁴ Sandra Martin, "Obituary: John Seeley, 94, Sociologist and Psychoanalyst", *The Globe and Mail*, Saturday January 26th, 2008

A community of scholars, like a religious community, must be a community where goodness, truth, and beauty go before all and unite all in a common dedication that makes power and politics subordinate, if not irrelevant....

But Canadian Universities are mostly not like that. At best they are vast corporations; at worst, petty tyrannies using methods of internal government that would shame the worst political party or commercial organization....

Liberal education is for free men; it must be mediated by men who are free.⁷⁵⁵

In a later *Globe and Mail* book review entitled, *The Sad State of the Multiversity*, Seeley went so far as to say, "... a revolution is required".⁷⁵⁶ For Seeley's supporters, it was indeed the extremity of his political views that led to his expulsion from a province still steeped in the conservative traditions of a former British colony. To them he was an almost Christ-like figure martyred for his refusal to compromise on his ideals. This sentiment is very well captured in a published essay entitled, *John Seeley: Poet and Revolutionary*, written by a former colleague of Seeley's with the Department of Psychiatry, Dr. Donald Coates. His view of the York affair was that Seeley went in, "... with a profound belief in the form of university government itself as an educational instrument. This led to both disillusionment and exile a very few years later when, in a showdown between student activists and institutional authority, he was accused of attempting to undermine the authority of senior university officials".⁷⁵⁷ With regard to Seeley's leadership of the Forest Hill Village Project, Coates also emphasized his revolutionary zeal. It is also worthy of note that Coates, in the reference below to Tom Mallinson, points to the undeveloped therapeutic potential of "free discussion" in the classroom as Seeley's most significant "revolutionary" achievement:

It is perhaps even more important to emphasize that Seeley was never the academic engaged in promoting, entrenching, or discrediting established beliefs. His is the searching eye, the free spirit. A true intellectual, he has always been very much, 'his own man'. Also it needs to be said that his contemplation and observation is always in the context of action. While *Crestwood Heights* emerged as a book of seemingly dispassionate observation on the life of a single community, it must be remembered that *Crestwood Heights* in its inception was action research in almost pure form. There are those, Tom Mallinson for one, who regret that this side of *Crestwood Heights* went unreported, since Crestwood was an exercise of intense engagement. Beyond that, in truly majestic vision, the local change that was inspired and encouraged was seen as just the first step, the seed from which would grow a national mental health revolution in Canada. This was idealism, fanciful and freewheeling. No one, not even the charismatic Trudeau, has since had such a vision of change for Canada.⁷⁵⁸

⁷⁵⁵ John R. Seeley, "Letter to the Editor", *The Globe and Mail*, May 29th, 1963

⁷⁵⁶ John R. Seeley, "The Sad State of the Multiversity", *The Globe and Mail*, March, 1968

⁷⁵⁷ Donald B. Coates, "'John Seeley': Poet and Revolutionary", *Canada's Mental Health* 16:6 (Nov-Dec. 1968) p. 33-36 courtesy of CAMH Archives, D. B. Coates fonds, E36.

⁷⁵⁸ Donald B. Coates, "'John Seeley': Poet and Revolutionary", *Canada's Mental Health* 16:6 (Nov-Dec. 1968) p. 33-36 courtesy of CAMH Archives, D. B. Coates fonds, E36.

Coates' assessment of *Crestwood Heights* places Seeley in his best light. He would certainly have enjoyed being compared to Trudeau with whom he had actually formed something of a professional relationship. He loved to recount how Trudeau would call him to Ottawa for consultation on some matter of health policy or other, and how Trudeau would meet him in the Parliamentary cafeteria with his young sons draped over his shoulders. Those are nice memories, and it is not too much of a stretch to suggest that Seeley's pan-Canadian vision of a mental health revolution was kindred in spirit to Trudeau's conception of Canada as a mentor state to the world community. It was a time of grand visions, but we have since lost at least some of the naiveté that characterized the hippie era.

Now, it would be too simplistic from the perspective of our time to leave off with a description of Seeley as some sort of secular saint. We know that virtually from the time of his early childhood, there was a dark quality to Seeley's fate. It must have been a very cold and lonely experience to set off on your own as a young boy on a ship across the Atlantic. At that moment Seeley was unsure of everything. He no longer knew who his father was, whether he was Christian or Jewish, English or German. The teacher at Henfield to whom he had turned to as a substitute father figure had sexually abused him. He may have even doubted whether the woman who had cruelly disowned him at the dock as her way of saying goodbye was really his mother.

How could someone with such life experience trust anyone? Seeley was clever. He maneuvered the trials and errors of his journey to the new world with the skill of Odysseus. However, he had not emerged unscarred from the traumas of his youth. Having been cast adrift in life had made him resourceful, but also anxious and quick to anger. It was no wonder that he turned on others, even those who had been his greatest supporters like Aldwyn Stokes or Murray Ross, at the slightest sign of betrayal. Opposition to authority was clearly an understandable pattern in Seeley's life and may explain in large part the motivation for his anti-politics. Self-important bureaucrats like Stokes and Ross must have had to make many odious moves as part of their jobs, but they were hardly evil tyrants, as Seeley might have liked others to believe.

Still, there may be more to Seeley's story than has yet been revealed. This possibility is hinted at in an interesting piece of investigative journalism pursued by Jim Bledsoe into the "Seeley Question". The piece was entitled, "Stiletto for Seeley: An Academic Thriller" and was published in *This Magazine*. According to Bledsoe, a close confidant of Murray Ross and a member of the OISE Board of Directors, Roby Kidd, had made a decisive intervention at the Board Meeting during which the decision against approving the hire of Seeley was made. Kidd had reported to the meeting that, "Seeley had never done the great sociological work that we all had expected from him. We had

expected such great things from ‘Jack’ and he’d never quite done them”.⁷⁵⁹ This critique is confirmed in a performance appraisal of Seeley’s work submitted to the Office of the President by then Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science at York University, R. O. Earl. Earl reported to Ross that not only had Seeley never done any teaching at York during the three years in which he had served as Special Assistant to the President and Head of the Sociology Department, he had also not produced anything toward the completion of the curriculum-writing project for which he had been hired:

It does not appear that any report of research on a curriculum for York University has been made by Professor Seeley, in spite of repeated requests and reminders.⁷⁶⁰

In addition, Bledsoe reports, Kidd, “let out the crunch: that Seeley had had ‘problems’ and that there was reason for concern”.⁷⁶¹ Such an ominous-sounding warning can take on a particularly damaging meaning in an educational context. Obviously it had the desired effect, though it could easily have been a ploy to achieve that end rather than having been based on valid evidence of impropriety on Seeley’s part in the course of his duties. However, there is a similarly ominous sounding concern expressed by Dean Earl in a letter to Seeley at the time the crisis was unfolding in his relations with Murray Ross. This threatening inquiry suggests that there was a more serious level of suspicion in high places about Seeley’s behavior than simply that he had been remiss in the performance of his duties:

My concern, so far, has been on the ground of propriety; but impropriety has its penalties and if I did not do something about this case now both you and I would be in difficulty. Everyone here knows everything that goes on and I have even been asked about you, in this respect, by a person high in administration in the University of Toronto. (I said I did not understand the situation). Some here appear to be afflicted by unwarranted, unworthy and wild surmises. These must be dispelled.⁷⁶²

Not surprisingly, Seeley never directly addressed what may have been behind these “wild surmises” in any of the voluminous letters he later exchanged with Earl during the winter and spring of 1963 before he left York.

In the end, Seeley was banished from Canada in a symbolic sense at least, just as he had been from his country of birth. Though he certainly could have found other work in Ontario had he wanted to, the actions of administrators at the highest levels of Ontario’s Government and Universities ensured

⁷⁵⁹ Jim Bledsoe, “‘A Stiletto for Seeley’: An Academic Thriller”, *This Magazine*, Nov-Dec, 1975, Vol 9 # 54

⁷⁶⁰ R. O. Earl, The Functions and Performance of Professor John R. Seeley, memo dated Sept 16th, 1964, Clara Thomas Archives and Special Collections, John R Seeley Papers, 1954-1971, F0405, 1975 -012/012 (95)

⁷⁶¹ Jim Bledsoe, “‘A Stiletto for Seeley’: An Academic Thriller”, *This Magazine*, Nov-Dec, 1975, Vol 9 # 54

⁷⁶² Earl to Seeley, January 21st, 1963, Clara Thomas Archives and Special Collections, 1975 -012/012 (95)

that Seeley would never again be employed as an educator in the province. Was he then a martyr who was unfairly punished because he fought for radical ideas in education like training analyses for teachers, free discussion for children, and the “new university”? Or, was he an impostor who only put on a show of being an educational crusader to deceive us all about his real intentions? This question is important not only because of the curiosity that is aroused by such a compelling figure in Canadian history, but also because our understanding of the failure of early efforts in the field of mental health education largely turns on it. Indeed, if nothing else this study of the Forest Hill Village Project reveals that Seeley was the driving force behind the organization of the first successful experiment in psychoanalytic pedagogy in Canadian history. If the educational systems of Ontario and Canada had managed to build on what he discovered about the advantages of teachers participating in psychoanalytic self-reflection, and students engaging in free discussion, then Seeley’s dream of a society benefitting from a generalized system of psychotherapy would have been realized. However, with Seeley out of the picture, whether by the hand of external powers or by self-deception, the theory and practise of a psychoanalytically enlightened education languished in Canada’s public schools.

It is therefore important to think about whether Seeley as the progenitor of the Forest Hill Village Project was banished from Ontario because of institutional resistance to the ideas he represented. From this perspective, we might look with suspicion upon the sincerity of recent signs of renewed interest in the project of mental health education. However, it is equally significant to contemplate the extent to which the fate of this project hinged on the internal struggles of a difficult individual in history. As much as we can attribute the inspiration of the project to Seeley’s genius, we can also see the darker side of Seeley’s personality at work in its demise. Seeley’s story reminds us of the ancient Heraclitean wisdom that there are so many layers in the depths of time that we can only hope to scratch the surface in our search for the truth. Despite all our digging, on the most intriguing and momentous questions, the life history of John R Seeley leaves us in the dark. Who was the “Wolff child”? We may never know. However, we can at least say that we know enough about John R. Seeley to thank him for his work and for laying open his life for us to explore, even if only after death.

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